Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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CONTENTS

NOTICE TO READERS: On 6 May 1991, the DAILY REPORT will begin phasing in new radio and television sourcelines that reflect how a station identifies itself. This change eliminates the "Domestic Service" and "Television Service" designations in favor of the station identification as broadcast. The presence of a new sourceline reflects this change in policy, rather than the establishment of a new station or network.

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INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat To Meet Bessmertnykh, 'Probably' in Geneva *[Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B 9 May]* 1
Meets Soviet Diplomat in Tunis *[Amman AL-DUSTUR 9 May]* 1
'Arafat Comments on Lebanon, Palestinian Presence *[VOL]* 1
Fatah's Revolutionary Council Meets in Tunis *[Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B 9 May]* 1
Al-Husayni Interviewed on Talks With Baker *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 7 May]* 1
Central Council Speaks 'Language of Harmony' *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 5 May]* 3
Islamic Jihad Spokesman Views Baker Diplomacy *[SUNA]* 4

ARAB AFRICA

Algeria

Foreign Ministry Not Informed of Dumas Visit *[APS]* 6
Ghozali Interviewed on Palestine, Iraq *[Algiers Radio]* 6
Ben Bella To Run in Presidential Elections *[Algiers Radio]* 6
FLN Central Committee To Meet 9 May *[Algiers Radio]* 7

Egypt

Information Authority Head on Troop Withdrawal *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 7
*1990 Manufacturing Profits, Losses Reported *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 25 Apr]* 9

Libya

JANA Editor on VOA Terrorism Commentary *[Tripoli Radio]* 9
USSR's Nishanov, Delegation Arrive *[JANA]* 9
Al-Humaydi Recevies Yemeni Envoy *[Tripoli Radio]* 9

Tunisia

Ben Ali Meets With Burkina Faso's Campaore *[Tunis Radio]* 10
Students Killed in Clash With Security Forces *[Paris Radio]* 10
Ennahda Accused of Instigating Riots *[Tunis Radio]* 10

ARABIAN PENINSULA

Bahrain

German Defense Minister Arrives for Talks *[WAKH]* 12
Meets With Amir *[WAKH]* 12
Views Gulf, Turkey Deployment *[DPA]* 12
Minesweeping Units Discussed *[DPA]* 12
Concludes Talks, Departs *[WAKH]* 12

Cheney Arrives in Manama, Meets Defense Minister *[WAKH]* 13
U.S. Defense Secretary Departs 9 May *[WAKH]* 13
Amir Receives ROK Letter on Promoting Ties *[WAKH]* 13

Kuwait

Minister Sends Message to Egyptian Counterpart *[KUNA]* 13

Saudi Arabia

King Fahd Receives Cheney, Delegation 9 May *[Riyadh Radio]* 13
King Fahd Receives Message From Kuwaiti Amir *[SPA]* 13
Defense Minister Receives Thai Mission *[SPA]* 13

IRAQ

Spokesman Denies Forces Fired at U.S. Aircraft *[INA]* 14
Shiite Opposition Rejects Saddam's Talks Offer *[Berlin ADN]* 14
One-Month General Amnesty for 'Fleeing Iraqis' *[Baghdad Radio]* 14
Memos Protest Further U.S.-Saudi Overflights 14
4-5 May Activity *[INA]* 14
5 May Activity *[Baghdad Radio]* 14
6-7 May Activity *[Baghdad Radio]* 14
Minister Invites U.S. Firms To Supply Food *[INA]* 15
UN Informed of Iranian Cease-Fire 'Violation' *[Baghdad Radio]* 15
Health Minister Meets WHO Official in Geneva *[INA]* 15
Efforts To Restore Telephone Services in Al-Ta'mim *[INA]* 15
Motives of French-Iranian 'Alliance' Analyzed *[INA]* 15
Paper Denounces Iran's Role in Displacing Kurds *[INA]* 16
Tehran Notes Opposition Victory Over Army Unit *[Tehran Radio]* 16

ISRAEL

Arens: 'Any Subject' Open in Direct Negotiations *[Jerusalem Radio]* 17
Feasibility of Nuclear Deal With USSR Denied *[DAVAR 9 May]* 17
UK's Hogg Discusses European Role *[Jerusalem Radio]* 18
Classified Hurd Message Notes Arab Positions *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 9 May]* 18
Jordanians Building Lookout Posts Along Border *[HA'ARETZ 8 May]* 19
Libya Said To Increase Aid to Territory Residents *[AL-MANAR 6 May]* 19
Visiting Polish Minister Collapses, Hospitalized *[THE JERUSALEM POST 9 May]* 19
Fewer, More Elite Troops Set For Use in Territories *[MA'ARIV 8 May]* 19
31 New Factory Permits Granted in Territories *[GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICE]* 19
Plan To Add 36,000 Apartments to Jerusalem Area *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 9 May]* 20

JORDAN

Soviet Foreign Minister Arrives on 2-Day Visit *[Amman Radio]* 21
Al-Masri Views Visit *[JORDAN TIMES 9-10 May]* 21
U.S. Said Diverting Ship From Al-'Aqabah *[SAWT AL-SHA'B 9 May]* 21
'Abd-al-Majid's AL Nomination Said Backed *[SAWT AL-SHA'B 9 May]* 21
Government Accused of Misusing Gulf War Aid Funds *[JORDAN TIMES 9-10 May]* 22

LEBANON

Agreement Said Reached for Release of Hostages *[VOL]* 24
Soviet Ambassador on 12 May Bessmertnykh Visit *[VOL]* 24
Hizballah's Al-Tufayli Condemns 'Rotten Regime' *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 24
Lahd on Possible Request for Israeli Help *[VOM]* 25
Iranian Charge d'Affaires Views Arms Handover *[Beirut Radio]* 25
Foreign Minister Returns From Damascus *[Beirut Radio]* 25
Palestinians Arrested; PLO Intervenes in Clash *[VOL]* 25

Israeli, Lahd Forces Shell Southern Towns *[Beirut Radio]* 25
Hizballah Claims Attack on Israeli Positions *[RFL]* 25

SYRIA

Reportage on Visit by Soviet Foreign Minister 26
Meets Al-Asad *[Damascus Radio]* 26
To 'Press' Israel *[Damascus Radio]* 26
Role in Peace Process Viewed *[Damascus Radio]* 26
Views 'Identical' *[Damascus Radio]* 26
Departs 9 May *[Damascus Radio]* 26
Al-Shar', Lebanese Ministers View Peace Efforts *[Damascus Radio]* 27
Big Powers Urged To Apply Pressure on Israel *[Damascus Radio]* 27
Commentary Stresses 'Continuous' Peace Conference *[Damascus Radio]* 28

SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan

Mujahidin Tighten Siege Around Qandahar City *[Islamabad Radio]* 29
Former Minister Seeks Asylum in Bulgaria *[AFP]* 29
Red Cross Doubts Claims of Dead Soviet POW's *[AFP]* 29

Bangladesh

Premier Details Cyclone Relief Operations *[Dhaka International]* 29
Official: 50 Billion Taka Needed *[Dhaka Radio]* 29

India

Further Reportage on Visiting DPRK Delegation 30
Yi Chong-ok Meets Venkataraman *[Delhi Radio]* 30
Seeks Support for UN Membership *[Delhi Radio]* 30
Sharma Hosts Delegation *[Delhi Radio]* 30
Reportage on Preelection Violence in Punjab 30
State Assembly Candidate Killed *[Delhi Radio]* 30
Police Official Killed *[Delhi Radio]* 30
Minister on 'Law and Order Situation' *[Delhi Radio]* 30
5 Soldiers, 7 Militants Killed *[Delhi Radio]* 31
24 People Killed in Kashmir; Border Shooting Stops *[Delhi Radio]* 31
9 Killed, 25 Injured in Cross Fire *[Delhi Radio]* 31
• Reportage on Congress-I Election Campaign 31
• Draft Manifesto *[THE TELEGRAPH 8 Apr]* 31
• Release Postponed *[THE HINDU 13 Apr]* 32
• Gandhi Speaks at Madras Campaign Rally *[THE HINDU 19 Apr]* 32
• Shekhar, Other Janata Dal-S Members Campaign 33
• Statement to Press *[THE HINDU 9 Apr]* 33
• Speeches Open Campaign *[THE TIMES OF INDIA 1 Apr]* 34
Shekhar to Students *[THE TELEGRAPH 27 Mar]* 36
• Shekhar Popularity Analyzed *[THE HINDU 27 Mar]* 36
• BJP Expected To Win in Uttar Pradesh Assembly *[JANSATTA 20 Apr]* 38

Iran

Najafi Appointed Ground Forces Commander *[Tehran TV]* 39
Habibi, Rowhani Appointed to Expediency Council *[Tehran TV]* 39
Genscher Visits Bakhtaran Refugee Camps *[Tehran Radio]* 39
Praises Relief Efforts *[IRNA]* 40
President Receives Kuwaiti Shiite Leader *[IRNA]* 40
Velayati on War Reparation Talks With Iraq *[IRNA]* 40
Velayati Confers With Visiting Thai Official *[Tehran Radio]* 40

Western 'Propaganda' Plays Down Refugee Situation *[IRNA]* 40
UN Envoy Discusses Refugees With Officials *[Tehran Radio]* 41
Mottaki Meets With UN Information Official *[Tehran Radio]* 41
Official on Effort's To Attain Economic Balance *[IRNA]* 42
Italy To Construct Power Plants in Iran *[IRNA]* 42
Australian Immigration Minister Begins Visit *[IRNA]* 42
Australian Commerce Minister Concludes Visit *[Tehran Radio]* 42

Pakistan

Sharif 'Regrets' Indian 'Massacre' of Kashmiris *[Islamabad Radio]* 42
Editorial Commends Sharif on Nuclear Issue *[DAWN 5 May]* 42
NATION Critical of U.S. Aid Cut-Off *[8 May]* 43
Soviet Canceling Visit Shows 'Hardening' *[THE NATION 5 May]* 44
9 Killed, 12 Injured in Rawalpindi Bomb Blast *[Islamabad Radio]* 44
Sugar Industries Handed Over to Private Sector *[Islamabad Radio]* 44

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat To Meet Bessmertnykh, 'Probably' in Geneva

JN0905061591 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 9 May 91 p 1

[Text] Amman—SAWT AL-SHA'B has learned that Yasir 'Arafat, president of the state of Palestine, will meet Soviet Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh during his Middle Eastern tour, which will take him to Jordan, Israel, and a number of states in the region.

The venue for the Palestinian president's meeting with the Soviet foreign minister has not yet been specified. Palestinian sources, however, said the meeting will probably take place in Geneva.

During the meeting, Yasir 'Arafat will emphasize the Palestinian firm principles, particularly the Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories, the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital, and the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.

Bessmertnykh met last week with a Palestinian delegation led by PLO Central Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas in Moscow.

Meets Soviet Diplomat in Tunis

WA0905145091 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 9 May 91 p 17

[Text] Tunis, WAFA—Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat received in Tunis yesterday the Soviet charge d'affaires, Robert Turdiyev. They discussed the latest developments, particularly the Soviet foreign minister's visit to the region.

'Arafat Comments on Lebanon, Palestinian Presence

NC0905082591 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0515 GMT 9 May 91

[Text] Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat has stated that Lebanon is going through a period of recovery which will be followed by the consolidation of security and stability on the domestic and Palestinian and Arab levels.

In a press interview, 'Arafat declared his support for mediator Muhsin Ibrahim's efforts on the Palestinian, Arab, and Lebanese levels. He said: We were the first to respond positively to the efforts of the Lebanese state, particularly on the question of Palestinian weapons in the mountain region. I appreciate the difficulties the government has faced and is facing in returning stability to Lebanon and in imposing its authority and sovereignty over Lebanese territory.

'Arafat expressed his readiness to do whatever is necessary to bring Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon, noting that an Arab effort to resolve the Palestinian issue is not yet under way, and that the United States is working to normalize Arab-Israeli relations.

[In its report on the 'Arafat interview, (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic at 0445 GMT on 9 May adds: "In an interview with AL-NAHAR, PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat explained that he has seen nothing that indicates that a dialogue among the parties concerned on the status of Palestinians in Lebanon is imminent. He said: This is our objective, and we hope the Lebanese Government shares it. 'Arafat maintained that neither President al-Asad nor President al-Hirawi will facilitate attempts to strike at the Palestinians in the south."]

Fatah's Revolutionary Council Meets in Tunis

JN0905071391 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 9 May pp 1, 16

[Text] Amman—Meetings of Fatah Movement's Revolutionary Council will begin today in Tunis. The meetings will be chaired by Yasir 'Arafat, president of the state of Palestine.

During the two-day meetings, the Revolutionary Council will discuss a number of issues, particularly the PLO's future political moves in light of the current moves to resolve the Palestine question, the means to increase aid to the Palestinian intifadah in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and a number of Palestinian and Arab issues.

Al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, Palestine's ambassador to Jordan and Fatah Central Committee member; 'Abbas Zaki, Fatah Central Committee member and secretary of the Intifadah higher committee; and a number of Revolutionary Council members residing in Jordan have left Amman to attend the meetings.

Al-Husayni Interviewed on Talks With Baker

PM0905094391 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 7 May 91 p 3

[Interview with Faysal al-Husayni, director of the Arab Studies Center in Jerusalem, by Zaki Shihab in London; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Shihab] You have met three times with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. What was the result of these meetings?

[Al-Husayni] Actually, the three meetings differed in nature. At the first and second meetings the discussions were about the problems and the obstacles. The third meeting dealt with ways of overcoming these problems and obstacles.

I believe that on his first tour Baker's impression was that he was dealing with an issue that was not that difficult. He also had the impression that, because of their living conditions, the Palestinians were looking for any solution. He also had the false impression—I do not know where he got it from—that the link between the Palestinians inside the occupied territory and the Palestinians outside the occupied territory was about to be severed. He believed and hoped that he would be able to deal with the Palestinians inside the occupied territories in isolation from the Palestinians outside.

During the meetings with him it was emphasized that the issue of the link between the two was not only esssential

and a matter of principle but also practical, and that without such a link there was no possibility of progress in the peace process.

Another point which he noticed was that while we explained our position and opposition to some of his ideas in a scientific, sound, comprehensible, and reasonable way, there clearly was some unreasonable Israeli opposition aimed at promoting Israeli wishes and designs, not in any way based on any international laws or even international understanding. By contrast, the Palestinian position was completely linked to international legitimacy.

All these things began to show Baker that his task was not easy. I believe that at one point he was about to find himself in a position where he would have had to take a clear stand and indicate to the Israelis that they were the ones trying in every possible way to obstruct the peace process.

I believe that point was reached during his fourth visit, when he cut short his meeting with Shamir because of his mother's death. I believe that his departure from the region was not entirely due to an urgent need to leave in a hurry, but perhaps due to his desire not to blow up the peace process at this particular time and to gain time in the hope of coming back with some new methods, new logic, and new pressures to surmount the Israeli obstacles.

[Shihab] Several Palestinian, Arab, and even international parties are saying that Baker's efforts have made some progress. In what field was that progress made?

[Al-Husayni] Judging by the atmosphere of the meetings and the discussions about the PLO, for example, we can say that there was some difference between the first session and the third session. The U.S. position at the first session was one of refusal to deal with the PLO at least for the time being, but at the third session the position was one of searching for ways of dealing with the PLO without triggering a battle, a direct confrontation with Israel.

[Shihab] During the talks with Baker the Palestinian and U.S. sides agreed on certain things but decided to keep them secret and not to divulge them. What is the nature of these things?

[Al-Husayni] The Americans told us that they had some options on more than one issue and that these options included parts which were in agreement with the Palestinian ideas in one way or another. They told us not to discuss these options in the media to prevent Israel from exploiting that by starting a media battle that would jeopardize the political process.

[Shihab] In what field were these options? Were they related to Palestinian representation or the nature of the likely solution?

[Al-Husayni] They were primarily related to representation. When we talk about representation we ask for certain points of substance that would pave the way for a political solution. So when we talk about the form, we do so by emphasizing certain points of substance.

[Shihab] You have said that there was a change in the U.S. attitude to the PLO and that a new formula for dealing with it was under discussion. That being the case, do you expect a resumption of the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue in the near future?

[Al-Husayni] You know that certain questions have been addressed to the United States on the conditions or the circumstances in which they believe the dialogue between the United States and the PLO could be restored as before. Messages have been conveyed to the PLO. We believe that some points are open to discussion while other points were made as some kind of U.S. precaution and a pretext for not resuming the dialogue without giving genuine reasons. I believe these conditions must disappear. [passage omitted]

[Shihab] You addressed questions to Secretary Baker on his concept of Palestinian representation. Is there any concept likely to be implemented?

[Al-Husayni] The purpose of most of the questions addressed to the Americans on the nature of Palestinian representation was in fact to emphasize to the U.S. Administration that there was no alternative to the PLO and no alternative to an independent Palestinian delegation to any future negotiations. By an independent Palestinian delegation I mean a delegation representing all the Palestinian people, not just the Palestinians of the occupied territory.

In the beginning the Americans wanted to confine the matter to the occupied territory, but they began to see the necessity and importance of including Palestinians from outside the occupied territory. Because the Americans are not so far convinced that Israel would agree to an independent Palestinian delegation representing Palestinians inside and outside the occupied territory, they are trying for a joint Jordanian delegation or a joint Arab delegation.

[Shihab] Does Baker expect a radical change in the Israeli position on the question of representation?

[Al-Husayni] It seems that during the third meeting, on his third visit to the region, Baker began to feel that there was an Israeli inclination to accept the idea of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian meeting, but not in a clear way.

It seems that Baker was hoping to arrive at a formula acceptable to the Palestinians and the Israelis, but he did not explain to us the formula that would be acceptable to the Israelis. We, as Palestinians, explained that we wanted an independent Palestinian delegation but had no objection to listening to other views if there were any. [passage omitted]

[Shihab] In the past discussions focused on an international conference, then a regional conference, and now there is talk of just a peace conference. Is any particular formula being considered as a basis for the conference?

[Al-Husayni] The United States is trying for a settlement in the region that would be an American settlement, in the sense that it wants to control the region in the future. Israel wants a U.S.-Israeli partnership but such partnership is unacceptable even to the United States. As far as we are

concerned, we want a settlement not linked to U.S. or Israeli interests because these interests may run counter to our own interests at some stage. We want a solution that rises above these interests, and nothing does that other than international legitimacy and UN resolutions. That is why we call for an international conference.

Now the Americans are trying to play with names or titles, thinking that the phrase "regional conference" is not acceptable to the Palestinians. They are saying: Let us call it a peace conference. We Palestinians are interested in the substance, not in the title.

[Shihab] More than two months ago President Bush announced certain principles. In your three meetings with Baker, to what extent did you feel Baker was keen on implementing these principles?

[Al-Husayni] The U.S. aim is to achieve stability in the Middle East. It is therefore pressing for a solution that would lead to stability. There is the Israeli obstacle, so in the beginning the United States tried to persuade us to accept the Israeli terms, then terms that would be satisfactory to Israel and ensure stability in the region. We reject that. We cite what Bush said in his speech to push for a settlement in line and in harmony with the Palestinian requirements and terms. We can say the following: The U.S. target is stability in the region. There can be no stability without settlement of the Palestinian question, and that cannot be achieved without the fulfillment of the Palestinian aspirations.

The United States knows that it cannot impose a solution unacceptable to the Palestinians. [passage omitted]

Central Council Speaks 'Language of Harmony'

PM0805135591 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 5 May 91 p 5

[Interview with Dr. Nabil Sha'th, member of the Fatah Central Committee and chairman of the Palestine National Council Political Committee, by Zaki Shihab in Granada; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Shihab] Anyone who read the recent Palestine Central Council [PCC] statement noted the new political language marking the Palestinian political rhetoric. What has happened, and to what does the PLO aspire in the stage ahead?

[Sha'th] The recent PCC meeting was the most important of the council's meetings. The atmosphere was charged with the feeling of responsibility toward our Arab world and our Palestinian issue. The prevailing climate was a climate of harmony, of closing ranks, of mending the Arab rift, and of restoring as much Arab coordination, harmony, fraternity, and solidarity as possible.

The feeling was that after the catastrophe experienced by our Arab nation, which divided the ranks and caused great destruction, there is a need to reunite ranks and restore cohesion in the Arab region, and that that is the only possible historical solution to resolve our Arab problems and move together toward a solution to our Palestinian problem.

So I believe that anyone who reads the recent statement will very much sense the language of harmony, the language of mending the rift, and the language of calling for unity. [passage omitted]

[Shihab] Is the new language the result of the PLO's revision of its position on the Gulf crisis or its past experience in political action?

[Sha'th] Without doubt an assessment was made of the entire past stage. That assessment prompted all to feel that there was no way out of the dilemma except through Arab unity and solidarity. And undoubtedly that view reflects an assessment. It was that assessment that prompted all to feel that only way out of the dilemma is through unity, harmony, and solidarity in the Arab ranks. As I said, it reflects an assessment of what happened in the past. Our view is that we must never allow disagreement to divide the Arab region, because that weakens us, squanders our strength, creates all kinds of crises, and makes it impossible to recover Palestine. [passage omitted]

[Shihab] With regard to Syria, the call for normalizing relations has been renewed, especially in view of the new atmosphere after Umm-Jihad's visit to Damascus.

[Sha'th] Umm-Jihad's visit was positive. I believe that there is complete willingness in the council, the Executive Committee, and at the leadership level to open all doors of dialogue and restore cohesion and fraternity with sisterly Syria and all sisterly Arab states.

I believe that there is a feeling that Syria is playing an important role and taking a positive position in the face of all Israeli attempts to move away from the pivotal issue and call for the need to normalize Arab-Israeli relations first.

The same position toward Israel has been announced by Egypt, Jordan, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. We find that the atmosphere is very positive for restoring Palestinian-Syrian relations and other Palestinian-Arab relations. [passage omitted]

[Shihab] With regard to the subject of Jordan, there were calls at the council's meetings to form a provisional government and a joint delegation with Jordan. What is proposed at present?

[Sha'th] What is proposed and agreed by all is to consolidate and strengthen the staunchest of relations between Palestine and Jordan, proceeding from the special relationship between the Palestinian and Jordanian peoples and from the principle that has never changed—the principle of adhering to the rule launched by Palestinian national councils, that is to seek to conclude a confederal unity between the Palestinian state and Jordan when independence is achieved. This is why the council called for establishing a strong relationship and conducting all the coordination required at this stage in order to achieve the ultimate outcome of establishing the independent state and then the confederation.

[Shihab] U.S. efforts are being exerted to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. What is the difference between present U.S. efforts and previous efforts?

[Sha'th] Actually the first difference was the clear and advanced formula put forward by President George Bush on 7 March. It was characterized by clarity vis-a-vis the Palestinian people's rights, which were termed the Palestinian people's legitimate political rights, and the need to exchange land for peace in implementation of Resolution 242, specifying Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories as the way to implement that. In fact it was characterized by clarity and analysis when the U.S. President said that territory was no longer a security guarantee, armies do not protect security, and security can only be protected by justice. He linked security to justice.

That U.S. view opened the doors for moving forward in an acceptable way, and the PLO hastened to support it only a few hours later. The PCC emphasized the positiveness of President Bush's plan, and the United States called for adherence to it as a basis for the U.S. proposal for a solution to the Palestinian issue. But in fact the difference between the proposal presented by Bush and the one presented by Baker about the mechanism for implementation is a major one—which inspires doubt about the credibility of that proposal. This is because it cannot be said that a just and complete peace can be realized without true U.S. pressure on Israel.

Before us is a clear example, namely the way in which the Security Council resolutions were implemented by force in the Gulf. Furthermore, Secretary Baker's initiative began by talking about a solution on two parallel lines. This is in addition to the claim that progress must be made in Arab-Israeli relations before arriving at a solution to the Palestinian issue—which was rejected by the Arab states concerned. But I say that, despite our realistic view and doubt about the credibility of the U.S. step, we will not hesitate to welcome any action. The PLO leadership formed a Palestinian delegation from inside the occupied territories which met with Baker three times. The fourth was canceled owing to the death of Baker's mother, when he had to return to Washington. At all these meetings the PLO, through its delegation, took positive steps to clarify the Palestinian position and cooperate in reaching fruitful results that would lead us to an acceptable line for resolving the Palestinian issue. You will find that the PCC's resolution is completely consistent with that.

The fixed principles are clear: We do not accept anything less than the Palestinian people's self-determination, leading to a Palestinian state and independent sovereignty. We want international legitimacy to be a basis for any peace conference. No one can be accepted to represent the Palestinian people except their representative, the PLO. But within these fixed principles we display the required flexibility to avoid aborting any political attempt that might lead to a just and lasting solution.

[Shihab] But it does not seem that there is U.S. and Israeli interest in any guarantees the PLO offers.

[Sha'th] That is untrue, because our brothers who met with Baker sensed considerable progress between his first and third meetings.

[Shihab] In what area did that progress take place?

[Sha'th] It is difficult to talk about it in detail now, especially as it was agreed not to publish the talks so that that would not lead to Israel's refusal to move down the road of settlement.

But I say that it was declared that Baker abandoned a number of proposals, including the need for all the Arab states to attend the proposed peace conference and for them to offer the required concessions to Israel. Baker found it necessary to have a formula for UN representation and to rely on the resolutions of international legitimacy, first and foremost Resolutions 242 and 338. The U.S. secretary of state backtracked even from the name "regional conference" to the name "peace conference."

In fact we are not opposed to names as long as the next conference is based on international legitimacy, held under UN supervision, and attended by all parties on an equal footing. Let it be called whatever name is suitable. And Baker now believes that it is necessary to include Europe. So there has been a change in the U.S. position on the Palestinian issue through the continuing meetings with the Palestinian delegation.

There also is his acknowledgment that it is necessary for that conference to be held and not be confined to a ceremonial opening session, as was proposed. There is progress, but I say that we have not yet arrived at what we want. But we will continue the dialogue with the United States. [passage omitted]

[Shihab] More than one Jordanian official has said that Jordan would not object to forming a joint delegation with the PLO if the PLO accepted that. What is your comment?

[Sha'th] Actually we prefer an independent Palestinian delegation from inside and outside named by the PLO. We have said in the past that we do not object to a joint Arab delegation. But any other formula must be secured through a Palestinian decision from the highest Palestinian leadership councils. We are always open to cooperation with Jordan. Our condition is that we should be represented on an equal footing with any other party. But the decision so far is still an independent Palestinian delegation. [passage omitted]

Islamic Jihad Spokesman Views Baker Diplomacy

EA0605153491 Khartoum SUNA in English 0915 GMT 5 May 91

[Text] Khartoum, 5 May (SUNA)—Spokesman of Palestinian Islamic Jihad movement Dr. Fathi Ibrahim stressed that shuttle diplomacy by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker in the Middle East is a mere waste of time and effort. We consider it, he said, as an attempt to absorb Arab and

Islamic anger against the United States and the West in the aftermath of the Gulf war. In a press statement to "AL-SUDAN AL-HADITH" daily, spokesman of Palestinian Islamic Jihad said that available options (?such) as autonomy rule, confederalism or elections are all futile for Palestine liberation will only be achieved through struggle and jihad. Dr. Fathi Ibrahim added that Islamic Jihad movement is not an alternative to PLO, instead it is condition that PLO will not legalise occupation by the Jewish state [of] any part of Palestine land.

Algeria

Foreign Ministry Not Informed of Dumas Visit

LD0805094391 Algiers APS in Arabic 0925 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Algiers, 8 May (APS)—A senior official at the Foreign Ministry has stated that he has no information regarding the forthcoming visit to Algeria by French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas.

This response was made to an APS inquiry with regard to the report published by AL-WATAN that the French foreign minister is expected in Algeria on 12 May 1991.

The senior official indicated that the Foreign Ministry has not so far received any official notification with regard to the date of this visit.

Ghozali Interviewed on Palestine, Iraq

LD0905072791 Algiers Domestic Service in French 1800 GMT 8 May 91

[Interview with Foreign Minister Sid Ahmed Ghozali by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Correspondent] Mr. Ghozali, will Algeria speak in favor of a regional or international conference on the Middle East?

[Ghozali] Algeria, as all other Arab countries without exception, has always spoken in favor of an international conference. On the occasion of several Arab summits, the Arabs unanimously adopted this stance. Indeed, we must not allow ourselves to be dragged into guarrels over the form of it. Let us not be involved in mere words: Regional or international conference, we can call it anything, what matters is the content. The objective is to enable the Palestinian people to emerge from the state of occupation in which it finds itself, with everything that it involves: oppression, lack of freedom, attempts on the security of the Palestinians. [sentence indistinct]

The first and fundamental question is whether the Israelis are willing to sit at the same table with the Palestinians and talk. The Palestinians have already taken a stand through the PLO. It is a question of implementing the UN resolutions; hence the need to involve the United Nations in this as an international body, also to give guarantees for the security [words indistinct]. Who is to represent the Palestinian people? It is up to the Palestinian people to decide. [Words indistinct] it is the PLO which is appointed by the Palestinians themselves as the sole representative. Even the Palestinians in the occupied territories who have been contacted and who met various American officials, particularly James Baker, have said it clearly. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Mr. Minister, do you think there are more chances for peace in the Middle East after the Gulf war than before?

[Ghozali] I may be wrong, but we have always said—before the war and also now—our fear was that the chances of a softening of the Israeli Government's position would be weaker, for obvious reasons. Before the Gulf war there was a counterweight to Israeli military power—there was Iraq. Even at that time the Israeli Government was extremely intransigent. Now Iraq has been destroyed. Will this make the Israelis more agreeable? We do not think so. We hope that the initiatives attempting to find a just solution to this problem meet with success. We do not see the authors of these initiatives on the right road to success. We know well the position of the Israeli Government, an officially declared expansionist position. They even speak of a transfer of the Palestinians; that is, removing them once more from the lands where they were pushed to after the establishment of the Israeli state. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Just a few words about Iraq. You know that the American, British, and French powers—to mention only those—speak of an alleged humanitarian duty to interfere in the Kurdish question, among others. How does the Algerian foreign minister see this concept?

[Ghozali] For several months now we have been witnessing innovations in the law [words indistinct] how the United Nations resources and structure have been used to give legal cover to the destruction of Arab countries and the new formula, the concept of humanitarian interference. It is an extremely dangerous thing. When it was formulated it became clear to what purpose it was done—to justify genuine attempts on the sovereignty of a country. The United States itself resisted such interference; that is, a military intervention in Kurdish territory. There were statements rejecting this, but finally they allowed themselves to be dragged into it. This is the problem, a very delicate one: Who is to decide over the situations in which the duty to interfere must be implemented? It is not said. So far it has been those who use force and violate the sovereignty of states who use this concept. [passage omitted]

We ask ourselves a question. There is a people being attacked, besieged, mishandled, and mistreated [words indistinct]. We ask a question: Can one imagine this duty to interfere, such as it is understood, to be applicable to the Palestinian people? And in this case, it may merit discussion.

Ben Bella To Run in Presidential Elections

LD0805190191 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] The Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] is not the only party calling for early presidential elections—the same demand has been made by Ahmed Ben Bella, leader of the Movement for Democracy in Algeria [MDA] and the former Algerian president, when he addressed a rally in Mascara. The only difference between the MDA and FIS is that the former is calling for presidential elections after the legislative elections, rather than simultaneous elections.

[Begin Ben Bella recording] The elections are going to take place within the framework of multipartism and the new Constitution. When we get to the National People's Assembly, the president of the republic will be the only one to have won the thanks of his party—we cannot say the

FLN [National Liberation Front] because the latter does not belong to him. I am talking about the party in power.

There will remain an essential legal and constitutional contradiction between all these bodies and the president of the republic. We kindly ask him to ensure that presidential elections are held within three months after the general elections. He is free to stand as a candidate with other brothers from other parties, and this humble person in front of you will also stand as a candidate for the presidential elections. The people will then choose. [applause] [end recording]

This is what Mr. Ahmed Ben Bella announced at a public rally in amir Abdelkader Square in Mascara yesterday. The rally was held by the MDA.

The former president of the republic said that he was visiting the city of Mascara while the country is going through extremely difficult circumstances which could seriously get out of control, just like the events witnessed in Algeria in October 1988.

After criticizing the reforms introduced by the present government, he added that the country is embarking on elections in an atmosphere of unease. Mr. Ben Bella went on to say that the only solution lay in a change from the top and that his party would demand the holding of presidential elections within three months after the forthcoming legislative elections.

At the end of his address, Mr. Ahmed Ben Bella called on the people not to vote for the ruling party at the forthcoming elections, because the ruling party, in his opinion, has lost all credibility.

It is worth mentioning that the former president of the Republic will today visit the city of Oran on the last leg of his tour of the western provinces.

FLN Central Committee To Meet 9 May

LD0805200791 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] YAWMIYAT AL-DJAZA'IR [JOURNAL OF ALGERIA] said that the FLN [National Liberation Front] Central Committee will hold a meeting on 9 and 10 May. According to this paper, the meeting will be devoted to discussing the strategy that should be adopted at the early legislative elections. The paper explained that this session of the Central Committee will be convened to condemn the divisions within the committee, especially after the departure of some leaders from the ranks of the FLN before embarking on the battle of the next elections.

The paper revealed that Mohamed Ben Ahmed Abdelghani and Abdelhamid Ibrahimi, former prime ministers and members of the Central Committee, have resigned from the Central Committee, bearing in mind that Mr. Kasdi Merbah had resigned from the Central Committee previously.

The paper noted that the FLN secretary general has reaffirmed in Constantine that the crisis of the FLN has been overcome. Nonetheless, the paper reported that the departure of Bohara and Ben Hammouda from the proceedings of the previous session remains unaccounted for and wondered if it should be considered a resignation.

The paper posed the question of whether the members of the party leadership in the Central Committee will present themselves as candidates at the next legislative elections.

Egypt

Information Authority Head on Troop Withdrawal

JN0805193491 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1750 GMT 8 Apr 91

[Interview with Dr. Mamduh al-Biltaji, head of the Egyptian General Information Authority, by Mustafa Bakri in Cairo on 8 May—recorded]

[Text] [Bakri] Dr. Mamduh al-Biltaji, head of the General Information Authority: Egyptian President Husni Mubarak announced this morning the withdrawal of our forces from the Gulf region. What is your interpretation of this sudden decision?

[Al-Biltaji] The announcement is in full harmony with the trends, principles, and steps of Egyptian policy in this area and other areas in the world. This means that when Egypt decided to send these forces, it was first responding to a request from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and second, implementing the Arab security treaty and the resolutions adopted by the Arab summit, the Islamic summit, and the Security Council on the liberation of Kuwait.

Accordingly, the Egyptian forces were sent at the request of the concerned parties. They accomplished their mission in full. Consequently, the decision to return these forces is in full agreement with the Egyptian position, and it is not a sudden decision as you said in your question. The decision was taken a month ago, and some of these forces have started to return home. This is Egypt's policy. We send our forces according to our principles to accomplish specific aims. These aims have been accomplished.

[Bakri] What then is the fate of the Damascus agreement in the light of the withdrawal of Egyptian forces, especially since this agreement gave Egyptian and Syrian forces a basic role in Gulf security arrangements?

[Al-Biltaji] The issue of security arrangements in the Gulf should really be a subject of full agreement by all parties concerned with Gulf security. As always and as repeatedly declared, the Egyptian position has been that Egypt is ready to examine and discuss the Gulf defense requirements and that the Gulf security arrangements should in the first place stem from the free will of the concerned states, which perceive a need to fill gaps in their security and that have clearly requested this. According to that request, discussions will be held and understanding reached on the circumstances and ways of drawing up these arrangements. Therefore, the statement the group of six states, in addition to Egypt and Syria, issued in Damascus was a statement defining the general framework of the concept of regional security—a statement giving a general concept.

It is essential that such concepts should move to another stage of precise, detailed discussion of these arrangements, the size, the places, and so forth. None of this was discussed. The statement, which drew up the general framework, continues to exist. As I have previously pointed out and in accordance with the extremely clear statements by President Husni Mubarak, our Egyptian forces went to defend legitimacy at the request of the concerned parties. They accomplished their mission fully and then returned because the mission is over.

[Bakri] Dr. Mamduh, some say Egyptian-Kuwaiti differences are behind this decision and that it was Kuwait that demanded the withdrawal of the forces on American request.

[Al-Biltaji] Such utterances do not usually arouse our interest or prompt us to respond to them. It was not and cannot be conceived that Egypt would be present in a position or place without being asked to do so. These are Egypt's positions, this is its role, and these are the principles it has always announced and practiced without exception.

[Bakri] Thus, Dr. Mamduh al-Biltaji, in your opinion, what about the future of security arrangements in the Gulf, in light of the decision announced by President Mubarak today?

[Al-Biltaji] Once again, these security arrangements in the Gulf, in the first place, concern the Gulf states themselves. These states feel that there are gaps in their national security in view of the experience of the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait. This experience has revealed a wide array of gaps in the Gulf and Arab national security in general. Therefore, such arrangements; their volume, timetables, participants in them, and all elements of these arrangements, should primarily stem from the free will of the Gulf states themselves. Egypt has pan-Arab responsibilities. It has a role, which it has always played and will continue to play. Within its role and pan-Arab responsibilities, Egypt is ready—as we have mentioned and as Egypt has always said—to discuss and study all requests to participate in formulating and defending national Arab security.

[Bakri] Egypt has frequently stressed rejection of the partition of Iraq. Then, what is its position in light of the foreign presence in northern Iraq? This presence, according to some press sources, is aimed at establishing a Kurdish state in northern Iraq as a prelude to partitioning Iraq.

[Al-Biltaji] Once again, Egypt does not deviate from its principles and policies. Egypt is a state with a policy that is easy to predict, considering its observation of the constants and principles governing its diplomatic and political activity and stands. Egypt is committed to a special principle imposed by the international law. This principle establishes the inadmissibility of interfering in the internal affairs of others, the inadmissibility of harming the territorial integrity of states, and not changing the political map of the Arab world and each of its regional entities. This frequently-expressed principled Egyptian stand is the current stand. In other words, Egypt continues to support the unity and independence of Iraqi territory, the same way it supported the unity and integrity of Kuwait and the need not to interfere by force to change the regime in Kuwait. The same principle applies to Iraq. Egypt is a country of principle. There is no harm in reiterating this fact to make it well-understood. Therefore, what is taking place in northern Iraq as part of efforts to protect refugees raises a new and different issue. It raises the issue of human rights and the process of systematic destruction and genocide of this minority, which is a part of the Iraqi people. But we say and believe that Iraq will not be partitioned. This is because the protection currently under way or the camps established to protect those Kurds do not at all or necessarily mean that there will be a partition. As for the press reports expecting the beginning of partition and things like that, this is an issue that can be dealt with by everyone depending on his views or orientations. It is the business of the press to analyze and examine. But what I believe, and according to all indications, there is no international, Arab, or even U.S. interest in establishing the precedent of Balkanization and partition, nor is there such interest on the part of any of the neighboring states, be it Iran, Turkey, or any other state. This is because this is a dangerous phenomenon and an unacceptable precedent. This war must not result in the partition of Iraq or other states. An aggression took place, and it is now over. Kuwait has been liberated. The territorial integrity and independence of Iraq must be maintained.

[Bakri] Finally Dr. al-Biltaji, Iraq yesterday agreed to the nomination of Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid as secretary general of the Arab League. Can we say that this represents an auspicious beginning for reopening the file of Egyptian-Iraqi relations on new bases, even in light of President Saddam Husayn's survival as head of state in Iraq?

[Al-Biltaji] Perhaps the file of Egyptian-Arab relations to which you refer has not been absolutely closed; it is a file that always remains open—in the past, the present, and it will always be open in the future. There are relations among peoples and countries—this sort of relations is eternal and historical, and will always continue, regardless of the nature and severity of political differences or the nature of ruling regimes in these countries. We are a state that belongs to the Arab nation; Iraq is also a state that belongs to the Arab nation. Egypt tried on many occasions to spare Iraq the dangers and destruction inflicted on it and its Armed Forces. Moreover, we have repeatedly declared that Egypt wants to maintain Iraq's capabilities in terms of human resources, funds, Army, and entity. This is a constant, continuing stance. Egyptian-Iraqi relations are bound to remain in place, and future circumstances will allow these relations to grow and develop. The initiative you mentioned contains a natural and good position. I believe that Iraq's desire to reembrace the bases of international legitimacy and Arab legitimacy and to rectify the grave error that caused the whole crisis is confirmed by many indications. The agreement to the nomination of Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid is one of many. It is clear that there is full adherence to all resolutions of the international community, as well as to the international will in relation to maintaining peace in the Gulf and regional peace on the

part of Iraq. No wonder then that Iraq should agree to the nomination of such a prominent figure who enjoys a pan-Arab history; namely, Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister.

[Bakri] Thank you Dr. al-Biltaji.

[Al-Biltaji] Thank you.

*1990 Manufacturing Profits, Losses Reported

91P40251A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 25 Apr 91 p 12

[Excerpt] Cairo, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Egypt's minister of industry, Engineer Muhammad 'Abd-al-Wahhab, has disclosed that 10 manufacturing companies in the public sector suffered losses of roughly 112 million Egyptian pounds in the past fiscal year, whereas 104 other companies saw profits of 1.5 billion pounds.

The minister stated before the parliament that total public sector production in manufacturing was 16 billion pounds and that the Egyptian worker's average productivity was 30,000 pounds per year while the average annual wage rose to 3,656 pounds.

He also said that the public sector's total fixed assets climbed to 12.5 billion pounds annually. [passage omitted]

Libya

JANA Editor on VOA Terrorism Commentary

LD0805195591 Tripoli Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] The Voice of America [VOA] last evening broadcast a commentary reflecting the viewpoint of the U.S. Government and expressing optimism over what the radio described as a drop in the number of international terrorism incidents. It is a secret to no one that this optimism is based on the meaning of terrorism to the U.S. Administration and the biased criteria it uses in the classification of terrorism and those who engage in it.

Commenting on this American commentary in which the name of the great Jamahiriyah was inserted, the JANA political editor said: The Voice of America commentary, which reflects the viewpoint of the U.S. Government, is no more than repeated words, the lack of credibility and objectivity of which has now become clear to all the world. Likewise, inserting the name of the great Jamahiriyah among what is termed the states that support terrorism is groundless and is nothing but a repetition of false claims [words indistinct]

The editor went on: We would not have accorded this commentary any importance had it not been for the deliberate hostile intentions it contains against the great Jamahiriyah, which refuses to move in the orbit of the U.S. Administration, has set up people's power, has declared the Great Green Document on Human Rights, and refuses to move an inch from its principles and objectives to establish a free society that builds its relations with people directly on the basis of mutual respect and noninterference in the domestic affairs of any state.

The inserting of the name of the Great Jamahiriyah once again in talk about terrorism is nothing but an echo of what is being repeated by the trumpets of Zionist propaganda, which is moaning under the blows of the popular revolution led by the angry generation in occupied Palestine. For this reason, one should not regard the VOA commentary as anything more than the result of the immense pressure exercised by the Zionist lobby against the U.S. Administration.

USSR's Nishanov, Delegation Arrive

LD0805225591 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1600 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Tripoli, 8 May, JANA—Rafik Nishanovich Nishanov, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Council of Nationalities, arrived in Tripoli this afternoon on a visit to the Great Jamahiriyah.

Nishanov made a statement to JANA in which he conveyed greetings from Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev to the brother leader of the revolution and wished the Libyan Arab people progress and prosperity.

He said: My invitation to the Great Jamahiriyah comes in response to an invitation by the secretariat of the General People's Congress to attend the sessions of the People's Congresses and to observe closely the effective implementation of direct people's democracy by the Libyan Arab people through their people's congresses in order to benefit from this pioneering experiment and convey it to the Soviet Union.

The Soviet official described relations between the Great Jamahiriyah and the Soviet Union as distinguished and built on the basis of continuous cooperation and mutual respect.

The chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Council of Nationalities is accompanied by Natalya Vasilyevna Lemesheva, secretary of the USSR Supreme Soviet commission for agrarian issues and food; Aleksey Sapegin, member of the USSR Supreme Soviet council of the Union commission for transport and communications affairs; and a number of experts in the Soviet Government.

Al-Humaydi Recevies Yemeni Envoy

LD0805191791 Tripoli Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 8 May 91

[Excerpts] This morning, Major al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi received Brother Yahya Husayn al'Arashi, minister of state for cabinet affairs in the fraternal Yemeni Republic and the personal envoy of President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih. At the beginning of the meeting, Major al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi welcomed the brother Yemeni minister and congratulated the fraternal Arab Yemeni people on the historic victory of the will of the Yemeni people by realizing unity between the two halves. He said: At a time when we are happy with the newly unionist country on the Arab Yemeni soil, we are in need of more dialogue, contacts, and consultations in the framework of

strengthening joint Arab action and boosting unionist steps in order to realize common objectives at the bilateral and pan-Arab level.

Major al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi stressed the eagerness of the great al-Fatih revolution and the Arab Libyan people to strengthen Yemeni unity because it has the strategic basics of the universal al-Fatih revolution. This unity is considered an important step and a new brick in the edifice of Arab unity.

For his part, Brother Yahya al-'Arashi said during his meeting with Major al-Khuwaylidi al-Hamadi that he is happy with his meeting with the brother leader of the revolution, lauding the pan-Arab and unionist spirit he found in the brother leader during all the pan-Arab and bilateral issues discussed. He also voiced deep satisfaction at the depth of the fateful relations between the two countries.

Brother al-'Arashi said: What happened in Yemen, with the realization of unity between the two halves, was due to the brother leader of the revolution and the continuous support of the unionist al-Fatih revolution that laid the foundation for this action with the signing of the Tripoli agreement [between Yemeni leaders before unification] and contributed, with the Yemeni leadership, with continuous dialogue until this great historic event was achieved on Yemeni soil. [passage omitted]

During this meeting, attended by the brother secretary for the affairs of the people's committees at the General People's Congress, the strengthening and promoting of bilateral relations between the two countries was stressed, and there was a study of ways of boosting them and moving them forward toward integration and inter-Arab action in the service of the interests of the one Arab people in the Great Jamahiriyah and fraternal Yemen.

Tunisia

Ben Ali Meets With Burkina Faso's Campaore

LD0805102591 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 2100 7 May 91

[Excerpts] President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali this evening at the Republican Palace in Carthage had a tete-a-tete with Blaise Compaore, chairman of the Popular Front and head of state and Government of the Republic of Burkina Faso.

An official spokesman for the presidency said that the talks dealt with the friendly relations between Tunisia and Burkina Faso, and ways of promoting these relations and bolstering bilateral cooperation. He added that in his talks with his guest, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali had focused on the political, economic, and social reforms carried out in Tunisia in the context of its democratic trend aimed at consolidating pluralism, strengthening human rights and liberties, and bolstering the bases of the state of law and institutions. He had also emphasized the attention Tunisia gives to diplomatic action and to relations with its brothers to provide the right basis for developing and expanding cooperation between the two countries in all fields.

In his talks with President Compaore, the president had also pointed out the great care Tunisia has been giving since the change [November 1987 overthrow of Bourguiba] to its Maghreban links and to promoting its relations with the region's countries, which has contributed to the establishment of the Arab Maghreb Union, and the setting up of its structures and institutions, stressing our country's determination to continue its support for the progress of that structure.

The two leaders reviewed issues of mutual interest at the African level. In this context, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali stressed to his guest the need to intensify dialogue and consultation among African countries within the framework of the Organization of African Unity and to regulate means of cooperation among African regional organizations in a way that would help to achieve the development of the continent and improve the conditions in it. In this context, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali stressed the importance of supporting cooperation among the southern countries in a way that would prepare them for an effective dialogue with the northern countries. [passage omitted]

Later expanded talks were held between Presidents Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and Blaise Compaore, attended by Minister Mohamed El-Jeri, director of the president's office; Minister of Tourism and Handicrafts Mohamed Jegham; and secretary of state for Foreign Affairs Nourreddine Mejdoub; on the Tunisian side, and by the secretary of state for the presidency, the minister of external relations, and the minister of environment and tourism on the Burkinabe side.

President Blaise Compaore had arrived in Tunisia this evening on a three-day friendly and working visit at the invitation of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. The head of state was at Tunis-Carthage International Airport to welcome his guest. [passage omitted]

Students Killed in Clash With Security Forces

LD0805202991 Paris Domestic Service in French 2000 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Tunisian television has just announced that two students were killed and three injured during scuffles between students and security forces in several Tunisian educational faculties. The television did not say where those incidents took place.

Ennahda Accused of Instigating Riots

LD0805221591 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 2100 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Riots took place this morning at a number of secondary schools and university institutions. They were premeditated, prepared and executed by groups of veiled extremists and expelled pupils and students. The riots were coordinated to take place simultaneously. They were carried out by their perpetrators at the same time using the same methods in different places. These included cutting off telephone lines; storming a number

of directors' and caretakers' offices whose contents were damaged; destroying and/or setting on fire as well as attacking university security posts with Molotov cocktails, stones, and petrol cans; and attempts to hinder classes at those institutions of education.

Security forces confronted these extremist elements. Seven policemen were injured as a result. Two policemen and five students were taken to the hospital. Two students died there.

It has become clear from the pamphlets, banners, and mottos of those extremists that they belong to the so-called Ennahda movement [banned fundamentalist party], a matter which was affirmed by preliminary interrogations with some of those arrested. They stated that the leadership of the movement had planned such attacks at the beginning of the week and authorized members to initiate acts of violence and sabotage in this vital and sensitive sector which prepares tomorrow's generations: the best and proudest assets of the country.

Bahrain

German Defense Minister Arrives for Talks

JN0705201391 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1740 GMT 7 May 91

[Text] Manama, 7 May (WAKH)—German Defense Minister Dr. Gerhard Stoltenberg arrived in Manama this evening on a three-day visit to Bahrain as part of a tour of the region.

He will hold talks with senior Bahraini officials on the latest developments in the Gulf, military cooperation, and issues of mutual concern.

Meets With Amir

JN0805093191 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0830 GMT 8 May 91

[Excerpt] Manama, 8 May (WAKH)—His Highness Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, amir of the State of Bahrain, met with German Defense Minister Dr. Gerhard Stoltenberg and his delegation in Manama today.

During the meeting, they reviewed latest developments in the region in the aftermath of the liberation of Kuwait. His highness praised Germany's positive role and participation in the liberation of the State of Kuwait. They also exchanged opinions about the good relations between the two friendly countries, ways of enhancing them in various areas, and issues of common interest. [passage omitted]

Views Gulf, Turkey Deployment

LD0705172191 Hamburg DPA in German 1655 GMT 7 May 91

[Excerpt] Manama (DPA)—The deployment conditions for the Bundeswehr units stationed in the Gulf region and Turkey have clearly improved during the last few days. "The ban on the flying of our helicopters was lifted by the authorities in Bahrain, and in the case of the aid operations for the Kurds on the Turkish border area, there are no longer any noteworthy tribulations, which cannot be said for Iran," Federal Minister of Defense Gerhard Stoltenberg (Christian Democratic Union) said today at the start of a four-day visit to the troops in Bahrain and Turkey.

Tomorrow Stoltenberg will pay a visit to the Federal Navy minesweeping unit which has been operating from Bahrain since April, and he will hold talks on security questions with the political leadership of the oil state. [passage omitted]

Minesweeping Units Discussed

LD0805175191 Hamburg DPA in German 1600 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Manama (DPA)—According to Defense Minister Gerhard Stoltenberg (CDU) [Christian Democratic Union], the governments of the Federal Republic and Bahrain are to put the stationing of German minesweeping units in Bahrain on a sensible and clear-cut foundation with a "memorandum of understanding." Stoltenberg said today on a visit to the German minesweeping units in Bahrain's capital, Manama, that the last hurdles to a written agreement of this nature—which will, inter alia, govern the use of Bahrain's territorial waters by German ships, liability issues, and the easing of entry regulations for German soliders—was settled today in talks with his counterpart Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Ahmad Al Khalifah.

In the view of the inspector of the Federal Navy, Vice Admiral Hans-Joachim Mann, the seven German minesweepers will operate in the Persian Gulf at least until September. The commander of the minesweeping unit, Friedrich Jacobi, said he thought freedom of shipping to and from Kuwait on the prescribed routes will be possible in four months at the latest. Even with the deployment of the entire international minesweeping fleet, consisting of around 30 ships at present, clearing the whole of the Gulf of the 1,200 or so Iraqi mines will "take up the entire year."

Speaking to the assembled ship crews, Stoltenberg defended the dispatch of German minesweepers to the Gulf region as a sign of Germany's increased international responsibility and a contribution to protecting European oil supplies, as well as civilian shipping. The question of amending the Constitution to allow the deployment of the Bundeswehr, for example, in the framework of the United Nations will be posed with renewed urgency in a few months, partly because of the European process of unification. In his view a political union of this nature is hardly conceivable without a joint security policy, said Stoltenberg.

According to the leadership of the German minesweeping units, the international minesweeping fleet in the Gulf, consisting of 30 ships of 10 different nations, has eliminated about 800 of the 1,200 sea mines positioned around Kuwait so far. Jacobi said the German ships had rendered 19 mines and eight aircraft bombs harmless.

Earlier Stoltenberg spoke with the emir of Bahrain, Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, about the postwar situation in the Persian Gulf. The emir praised the positive role played by Germany during the Gulf war in the liberation of Kuwait from Iraqi occupation.

Apart from developments in the Persian Gulf after the war, further topics during his talks with the government of Bahrain were cooperation between Germany and Bahrain. The two sides stressed the "mutual good relations" and discussed possibilities for expanding relations, it was stated.

Stoltenberg arrived in Bahrain yesterday on a four-day visit.

Concludes Talks, Departs

JN0905102291 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1000 GMT 9 May 91

[Excerpt] Manama, 9 May (WAKH)—German Defense Minister Dr. Gerhard Stoltenberg and his delegation today left Manama for Ankara following a three-day visit to Bahrain.

During the visit, the German minister held talks with senior officials in Bahrain which dealt with the current

developments in the region after the liberation of Kuwait, as well as bolstering bilateral relations especially in the military fields, and issues of mutual concern. [passage omitted]

Cheney Arrives in Manama, Meets Defense Minister

JN0805175991 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1744 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Manama, 8 May (WAKH)—U.S. Defense Secretary Dick Cheney arrived in Manama this evening as part of his tour of the region.

He was received by Staff Major General Khalifah Bin-Ahmad Al Khalifah, defense minister and deputy commander in chief of the Bahrain Defense Force, and senior officers of the Force.

The U.S. defense secretary is expected to hold talks on bilateral relations and issues of mutual interest.

U.S. Defense Secretary Departs 9 May

JN0905063391 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0530 GMT 9 May 91

[Excerpt] Manama, 9 May (WAKH)—U.S. Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney and his delegation this morning left Manama following a visit to Bahrain during which he held talks on bolstering bilateral relations as well as issues of mutual concern. [passage omitted]

Amir Receives ROK Letter on Promoting Ties

JN0805100991 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0820 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Manama, 8 May (WAKH)—His Highness Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, amir of the State of Bahrain, has received a letter from ROK President No Tae-u on current developments in Southeast Asia and on ways to promote relations between the two countries in various areas.

The letter was conveyed by ROK president's envoy, who was received by his highness the amir of Bahrain in Manama this morning.

The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Mubarak Al Khalifah, Housing Minister Shaykh Khalid Bin-'Abdallah Al Khalifah, and the Korean ambassador to Bahrain.

Kuwait

Minister Sends Message to Egyptian Counterpart

LD0805160191 London KUNA in Arabic 1000 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] The deputy prime minister and foreign minister, Shaykh Salim al-Sabah al-Salim, has sent a message to the Egyptian deputy prime minister and foreign minister, Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid.

The message addressed ways of strengthening bilateral relations, in addition to coordinating the positions of the two sisterly countries during the Arab foreign ministers' meeting, which is due to be held in the middle of this month. Kuwait will be the chairman of the 20th session of the Arab League's ministerial council.

The message also addressed the results of the Gulf Cooperation Council's foreign ministers' meeting.

The message was conveyed by Egypt's ambassador to Kuwait, Amin Nimr, during his meeting with the Egyptian deputy prime minister and foreign minister.

Saudi Arabia

King Fahd Receives Cheney, Delegation 9 May

LD0905124191 Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 9 May 91

[Text] King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, the custodian of the two holy mosques, received U.S. Defense Secretary Richard Cheney and the delegation accompanying him in his office today. The meeting was attended by His Royal Highness Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-'al-'Aziz, second deputy prime minister and minister of defense and aviation and inspector general; His Royal Highness Prince Salman Bin-'Abd-'al-'Aziz, the governor of Riyadh province; His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, the foreign minister; Prince Bandar Bin-Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, Saudi ambassador to the United States; His Excellency Dr. Abd-al-'Aziz al-Khuwaytir, the minister of education and acting minister of higher education; and Mr. David Dunford, U.S. charge d'affaires in Saudi Arabia.

King Fahd Receives Message From Kuwaiti Amir

LD0505175591 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1738 GMT 5 May 91

[Excerpt] Jeddah, 5 May (SPA)—King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, The custodian of the two holy mosques, has received a message from his brother the amir of the sisterly State of Kuwait. The message was delivered to the custodian of the two holy mosques by the Kuwaiti defense minister, Shaykh 'Ali Sabah al-Salim, during an audience granted to him and his accompanying delegation at the king's office today. [passage omitted]

Defense Minister Receives Thai Mission

LD0505143191 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1410 GMT 5 May 91

[Text] Riyadh 5 May (SPA)—His Royal Highness Prince Sultan 'Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, second deputy prime minister, minister of defense and aviation and inspector general, received in his office this afternoon a Thai friendship mission headed by Mr. Kasemsamoson Kasemsi, minister attached to the office of the Thai prime minister, who handed his royal highness a message to King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, from the king of Thailand.

During the meeting they reviewed the nature of the relations between Saudi Arabia and Thailand.

Spokesman Denies Forces Fired at U.S. Aircraft

JN0805183491 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1815 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 8 May (INA)—A spokesman for the Information Ministry has denied the announcement by the allied forces general command that Iraqi antiaircraft artillery opened fire on a U.S. aircraft.

In a statement to INA, the spokesman also denied a CNN report that Iraq antiaircraft artillery opened fire twice on U.S. aircraft. The spokesman said these two reports are fabricated and absolutely groundless.

A spokesman for the allied forces at the Turkish base of Incirlik said that Iraqi antiaircraft artillery opened fire on a U.S. Navy aircraft but missed it.

The [allied forces] spokesman added that the Iraqis opened fire twice on a U.S. A-6 bomber while it was overflying Iraqi territory but missed the plane. He added that it was not known who opened fire.

He said the plane was fired on once from an area west of Mosul and again from an area west of Dahuk near the airspace of safehavens established by the allied forces.

Shiite Opposition Rejects Saddam's Talks Offer

LD0805173391 Berlin ADN in German 1640 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Damascus (ADN)—Iraq's Shiite opposition has rejected an offer of dialogue from Saddam Husayn. As Bayan Jabr, spokesman for the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq, told ADN in Damascus today, they received an invitation to Baghdad from the president two weeks ago and did not act on it. They are in favor of negotiations, "but not with Saddam Husayn personally." Any other government politician will be considered as an interlocutor as soon as the dictator is deposed.

Jabr said that if the Kurdistan Front concludes an agreement with Baghdad it risks its seat on the five-man general secretariat of the 17-party opposition alliance. It is currently his turn to be chairman of this body in which all five members have a right to veto.

One-Month General Amnesty for 'Fleeing Iraqis'

JN0805183591 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1805 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] The Revolution Command Council [RCC] has issued a general and comprehensive amnesty for fleeing Iraqis, wherever they may be, freeing them from legal prosecution for any act punishable by law. Following is the text of the decision:

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Decision No. 126, dated 23 Shawwal 1411 Hejira, corresponding to 8 May 1991:

Decision: Based on the provisions of paragraph A of the 42d Article of the Constitution, the RCC has decided the following:

1. All fugitive Iraqis, wherever they are, are exempt from legal prosecution for any act punishable by law committed in the circumstances of riots and sabotage, excluding premeditated murder and rape.

2. The decision shall be valid for one month as of 26 April 1991.

3. The decision shall be published in the official gazette, and pertinent ministers and competent quarters are to put it into force.

[Signed] Saddam Husayn, chairman of the RCC

Memos Protest Further U.S.-Saudi Overflights

4-5 May Activity

JN0805150491 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1916 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] U.S. and Saudi warplanes have again violated Iraqi airspace.

In a memorandum to the UN secretary general, Iraq's permanent representative to the United Nations said that the U.S-Saudi air activities totalled 29 sorties, divided into 14 formations, and one individual sortie on 4-5 May. He said the aircraft were identified as F-14's and F-15's, which flew at altitudes ranging from 6 to 9 km and at a speed of 720 km per hour. He added that the warplanes flew over Baghdad, west of Baghdad, al-Najaf, Karbala', al-Kut, Ba'qubah, and Tall 'Afar on missions to monitor and harass.

5 May Activity

JN0805171691 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1600 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] U.S.-Saudi aircraft on monitoring and harassment missions have again violated Iraqi airspace.

In a memorandum to the UN secretary general, the permanent Iraqi representative to the United Nations said U.S-Saudi air activities for 5 May totaled 48 air sorties, consisting of 20 formations, and eight individual sorties. He said the aircraft were identified as F-14's and F-15's, which flew at altitudes between 5 and 8 km and at speeds of 600-720 km per hour. He added that the aircraft flew over Baghdad, al-Habbaniyah, al-'Aziziyah, al-Suwayrah, Samarra', Ba'qubah, al-Kut, al-Rutbah, and south of Karkuk.

6-7 May Activity

JN0905050191 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 0300 GMT 9 May 91

[Text] U.S. and Saudi aircraft have continued to violate Iraqi airspace. Iraq's permanent representative at the United Nations said in a memorandum he sent to the UN secretary general that on 6-7 May Saudi aircraft carried out 36 air sorties divided into 18 formations. The aircraft, identified as F-15's and F-14's, flew primarily over Baghdad, southern al-Kut, al-'Aziziyah, al-Habbaniyah, al-Qadisiyah, al-Miqdadiyah, and Ba'qubah. They aimed at surveillance and provocation.

Minister Invites U.S. Firms To Supply Food

JN0805195591 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1926 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 8 May (INA)—Trade Minister Dr. Muhammad Mahdi Salih has expressed Iraq's eagerness to resume trade and economic ties with all Arab and foreign countries.

In a statement to the press here today, he added that Iraq is ready to normalize trade ties with all states by holding meetings of the joint trade and economic committees with the SFRY, Italy, China, Morocco, and Sudan. As for the United States and Britain, relations with them are still not normal, the minister said.

The trade minister announced Iraq's readiness to accept any offer that could be made by any U.S. or European company to supply Iraq with foodstuffs, provided that their cost will be paid when Iraq is allowed to export part of its oil, or when its assets frozen in foreign banks are released.

The minister said there is an opportunity right now for foreign firms to contribute to the reconstruction of Iraq. He urged the United Nations to allow these firms to contribute to the reconstruction of what the war destroyed and not to stand in the way of this humanitarian endeavor.

The minister reaffirmed Iraq's right to establish normal ties with world states on the basis of mutual benefit, equality, and the lifting of the economic blockade that seeks to starve its people. He stressed the need to secure food and medicines for the Iraqi people, particularly to alleviate the sufferings of sick children and to secure their requirements of medicines and milk. He expressed his confidence that the Iraqi economy will recuperate and develop, especially considering that Iraq held out against the 30-state aggression and managed to liquidate the cliques of sabotage coming from across the borders and to enhance its national unity.

UN Informed of Iranian Cease-Fire 'Violation'

JN0705152091 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1400 GMT 7 May 91

[Text] The Iranian regime has once again violated the provisions of the cease-fire between Iraq and Iran. In a memorandum addressed to the UN secretary general today, Iraq's permanent representative at the United Nations said: The Iranian side shelled Iraqi forward positions in the southern sector of Iraq with artillery and mortars from inside Iranian territory on 25 and 26 April. He noted that this new violation, in addition to the previous Iranian violations of the cease-fire between the two countries, affirms the Iranian regime's insistence and intentional attempt to encroach on Iraq's sovereignty and security.

An INA correspondent in New York said that Iraq's permanent representative at the United Nations held the Iranian regime responsible for all damages caused by this violation.

Health Minister Meets WHO Official in Geneva

JN0805115891 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1120 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Geneva, 8 May (INA)—Health Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam Muhammad Sa'id has met here with WHO Director General Hiroshi Nakajima.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed health conditions in Iraq, the effects of the U.S.-Atlantic-Zionist aggression on the citizens' health, and the measures the WHO would take to tackle the health situation in Iraq.

The health minister arrived in Geneva last Saturday to lead the Iraqi delegation to the meetings of the 44th WHO session, which began here Monday.

Efforts To Restore Telephone Services in Al-Ta'mim

JN0805152091 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1240 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Karkuk, 200 km north of Baghdad, 8 May (INA)—Technical and engineering departments have remounted microwave equipment in al-Ta'mim Governorate and operated it experimentally to provide telephone communications with other governorates.

In a statement to INA, the director of the Communications and Post Department in the governorate said that the axial line linking the al-Ta'mim Governorate to al-Sulaymaniyah has been reopened. He added: Work is under way to operate 3,500 telephone lines originating from the switchboard of Karkuk, capital of the al-Ta'mim Governorate, as a first step toward repairing the 12,000 telephone lines, which is the capacity of that switchboard.

It was previously announced that the technical and engineering departments had remounted and reoperated one switchboard with a capacity of 1,000 lines in the city of Karkuk to provide telephone services to citizens.

Motives of French-Iranian 'Alliance' Analyzed

JN0905095691 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0810 GMT 9 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 9 May (INA)—AL-JUMHURIYAH says the game of dominating the region and the implementation of the new regional order plan are two elements in the French-Iranian alliance.

In its "Viewpoint" column, the paper says efforts to accelerate this alliance, whose signs appeared during the preparations for the economic, military, and political attack against Iraq, were crowned in the agreement to hold a summit meeting between Mitterrand and Hashemi-Rafsanjani, after covert and overt animosity lasting more than 11 years.

For the sake of this rapprochement and alliance, the paper says, Paris turned a blind eye to the fact that Iran is on the list of terrorism-exporting countries and that Iranian hands spilled the blood of innocent Frenchmen in Paris' streets.

AL-JUMHURIYAH believes that France's motives for accelerating its alliance with Tehran lie in the fact that the Elysee administration fears full U.S. hegemony over the region as designed by the new international division plan. According to this plan, says the paper, Washington does not allow any effective European political or economic role, especially after the Gulf developments.

Another motive, says the paper, is France's attempt to invest in Iran to make up for its losses as a result of its exclusion from Gulf projects.

To reward Tehran for its contribution to the third chapter of the aggression against Iraq and for sending its military units across the border to divide Iraq's national unity and endanger its sovereignty was yet another motive for France's rapid efforts to achieve cordial rapprochement with Iran, says the paper.

The paper accuses Iran of feigning resentment of the Atlantic occupation of areas of northern Iraq only to make more profits. It says this Iranian role has had a bearing on the political moves in the region over the past few days.

In this regard, the paper refers to statements by French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas, in which he forgot Iran's dramatic record in the field of human rights violations. It also refers to the fact that the complicated economic and financial problems between Paris and Tehran were placed on the road to solution during Dumas' visit to Iran of only a few hours.

AL-JUMHURIYAH concludes: All this suggests that the magic wand has again entered the political scene, highlighting the principle of mutual interests and distribution of spoils and benefits.

Referring to Washington's position on the overall game, the paper says: Paris does not sing a different tune from the Americans.

Paper Denounces Iran's Role in Displacing Kurds

JN0905101991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0850 GMT 9 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 9 May (INA)—In an article today, the newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH denounces the malicious methods used by Iran and other international quarters to drive huge numbers of Kurdish Iraqi citizens away from their villages and homes.

The Iranians were the most prominent contributor to the acts of sabotage in northern Iraq, says the paper, adding that the Iranians were the most active side in (?providing) the [word indistinct] Kurds with weapons of terrorism and [word indistinct] leaving their homes. What is really surprising, adds the paper, is that the Iranian "bazaar" itself was the most active market to trade in the tragedy of the displaced.

The paper says that the Iranian "bazaarists" used the most dirty market methods to deprive the displaced Kurds of any benefits and used armed force to drive them to stay homeless in mountains and dens.

No voice was louder than that of Iran in protesting the shortage of international relief material sent in the name of the displaced's tragedies. No voice was louder than Iran's in translating tragedies into a financially lucrative trade, in addition to the desperate political and military trade.

The paper describes these practices as cheap trade by Iran's rulers, who left no lie untold.

Tehran Notes Opposition Victory Over Army Unit

LD0805111191 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] The Voice of Revolutionary Iraq announced that opposition forces of that country attacked a unit of the Iraqi regime's Army near Jassan in Wassit Province, destroying a company of the 42d Army Division.

According to the Central News Unit, citing this radio, the opposition forces succeeded in this attack to arrest the commander of this company and 15 troops, including two officers. Also, a large amount of ammunition and weapons were captured by the opposition forces in this attack.

Arens: 'Any Subject' Open in Direct Negotiations

TA0805170791 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1605 GMT 8 May 91

[Excerpt] In direct negotiations, we will be prepared to raise and discuss issues without preconditions; each side will be allowed to broach any subject it wants. This was Defense Minister Moshe Arens' response to our correspondent's question on whether the settlements are subject for negotiations. Moshe Arens was speaking at Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial during a ceremony commemorating the 46th anniversary of the end of World War II and the victory over Nazi Germany. Our correspondent Gil Litman returned from the ceremony a short while ago:

[Begin recording] [Litman] The Soviet aliyah is the true victory over Nazism, said the defense minister during the ceremony at Yad Vashemthat ended not long ago. After that ceremony, we asked Moshe Arens whether the Israeli Government was doing enough to prevent the deal involving the sale of 300 T-72 tanks from Czechoslovakia to Syria.

[Arens] We have not completed our action yet, but we will do everything in our power and I hope we will succeed in persuading the Czechoslovak Government that this is not a good thing, that it does not help peace, and that it is harmful, in general, to sell weapons to the Arab countries.

[Litman] In other words, the deal has not yet been signed?

[Arens] It is beyond my capacity to give you such information. You have to ask the Czechoslovaks that. As far as we know, the deal has not yet been signed.

[Litman] Sir, do you share the growing feeling that Saddam was not defeated and that, in effect, in a few years he will again try to build up his potential and pose a direct threat to Israel?

[Arens] I do not feel that. Saddam Husayn was defeated, but there is definitely the danger that he might be able to create the impression in the Arab world that in fact he was not defeated.

[Litman] In light of the prime minister's remark last night, do you think the settlements are subject for negotiation?

[Arens] We have already said that in direct negotiations we would be prepared to conduct talks without preconditions. Every side will be able to raise whatever subject it wants.

[Litman] Do you think that Bessmertnykh's visit signifies the impending establishment of ties with the USSR?

[Arens] I think it would be inadvisable to risk making predictions. Mr. Bessmertnykh will be here in the very near future, and I presume that if indeed the Soviet Government has decided to reestablish ties with us, he will announce it.

[Litman] The defense minister also said that, just as the issue of POW's and MIA's features in every opportunity and every meeting with Soviet diplomats, the same will happen this time as well. The issue will be broached also during the Soviet foreign minister's upcoming visit to Israel. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Feasibility of Nuclear Deal With USSR Denied

TA0905105591 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 9 May 91 pp 1, 2

[Report by Miryam Fuchs and Pazit Ravina]

[Excerpts] Yuval Ne'eman, the energy and infrastructure, science and technology minister, is planning to visit the USSR in about a month to examine the possibility of purchasing a nuclear reactor. The above was reported in THE WALL STREET JOURNAL yesterday, citing Ilya Zemtzov, the minister's adviser.

"We must explore the Soviet option. We would like to learn some more about the reactor the Soviets run in Finland," Zemtzov told the paper. [passage omitted]

Israel is interested in two types of Soviet reactors, Western experts disclosed. The first, dubbed "Easthouse," is a reactor that was marketed to Finland and operates there after being improved by Westinghouse and Siemens. This plant, which is cooled by ordinary water, has so far shown no security malfunctions and is not like the Chernobyl one.

The second serves for water desalination along the Caspian Sea in the USSR, and the Soviets also use it to crush icebergs in the Arctic Circle.

A senior figure involved in the Israeli-USSR negotiations is Yevgeniy Velikhov, who heads the Kretzatov [name as published] Nuclear Energy Institute, and is vice president of the Soviet Academy of Sciences. This week he held meetings with senior Israeli officials and with electric company directors.

In reaction to THE WALL STREET JOURNAL report, Ne'eman told DAVAR: "I am not exactly sure what Zemtzov said, but he is not an expert on nuclear energy. He must have heard me say that the Finnish reactor is one of the most successful in the world—the combination of Siemens electronics and Soviet-made heavy parts. In due course, we will have our own Israeli-made nuclear reactor, which will incorporate the best parts." As to whether Israel was interested in these Soviet components, Ne'eman said: "Perhaps. The Finnish reactor is a great success, but a rector can cost anywhere between $500 million and $2 billion, so we had better be sure we put our money where our mouth is. I believe Israel's chances of purchasing a nuclear reactor are virtually nil. We do not buy them, but we study things. If we were buying, we would buy a 500-1,000 megawatt electricity-generating nuclear reactor."

Regarding Israel's interest in the purchase of a Soviet nuclear reactor for water desalination, the minister said: "The Soviets thought about taking a small 15-megawatt reactor that is used to break ice and surmount it with a nuclear desalination installation similar in size to our plant in Ashdod and the one we plan for Elat. Yet they still do not have the system. Anyone interested can buy it."

As for businessman Ya'aqov Nimrodi's involvement in the purchase of a plant from the USSR, Ne'eman added: "My views on the issue are clear from a letter that somehow reached the press." Ne'eman referred to a letter from him

to Nimrodi, in which he informed the latter that the ties with the Soviet Academy of Sciences were established by himself and that Nimrodi could not get involved in these issues. "Nimrodi has some experience through the earlier sales of desalination plants in the Persian Gulf. If he wants, he can study small desalination plants, but whoever installs one would have to register with the Atomic Energy Commission," Ne'eman said.

To which Nimrodi told DAVAR: "Regarding the integrated water desalinating nuclear plant, I have no comment. As for the desalination, I am still trying to bring a desalination installation from the Soviet Union which will supply 240 cubic meters of water a day."

Minister Yuval Ne'eman leaves for the USSR on 20 May as the head of a scientific delegation. He will visit Moscow and Azerbaijan.

UK's Hogg Discusses European Role

TA0805112791 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1000 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Visiting British Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Douglas Hogg says Europe should play a similar role in the Middle East peace process to the Soviet Union. Hogg was speaking in Jerusalem after a talk with Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu. Netanyahu said the important thing is not the sponsors but the participants, and if the Arabs will drop their preconditions there is nothing to stop them coming to the negotiating table now. Jack Katzenell reports:

[Begin recording] [Katzenell] Douglas Hogg evaded my question about how Britain could be a honest broker in the Middle East when she is still operating an arms embargo against Israel. He said he felt Britain was already showing herself to be an honest broker, and he did not think the Europeans could be left out of the peace process.

[Hogg] We certainly think that the Europeans have an important part to play in the process. We think that the role that we should play should be similar to that of the Soviet Union. And, it seems to me that sponsorship is one way of achieving that.

[Katzenell] Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu said Israel is prepared for European participation of some kind. But, it had still to be decided what form that would take. In Netanyahu's view, more international participants would not solve the underlying problem.

[Netanyahu] The real question is the participants. Are the Arabs willing to come to the negotiating table? Are they willing to rescind the state of war? Now, the Arabs have typically raised two types of objections. The first, they say: We are willing to come but we are not willing to come alone. So, we have said: All right, come together and then we'll break into separate negotiations. I think that is an excellent way to get around that obstacle. So far, none has come.

[Katzenell] Hogg disclosed that the Palestinians he met had said they could not enter into negotiations while Israel was still establishing new settlements. Asked whether progress could be achieved without the PLO, he replied: I don't think you could ever get agreement unless the Palestinian representatives spoke with authority and conviction. [end recording]

Classified Hurd Message Notes Arab Positions

TA0905091991 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 9 May 91 pp 1, 13

[Report by political correspondent Shim'on Schiffer]

[Excerpt] Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the Gulf states are prepared to support a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation for the talks with Israel in a bid to circumvent the PLO. They do demand, however, that a UN representative participate in a regional conference.

The above is included in a classified message British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd transmitted to Foreign Minister David Levi yesterday following a tour of these countries and in view of the current round of talks in the region led by the foreign ministers of the two superpowers, which began yesterday.

Our political correspondent obtained a copy of the full text of the British foreign secretary's message.

The message says that the Arab countries insist on the inclusion, in some way, of the UN secretary general in the regional conference which will be convened under the sponsorship of the two superpowers and with the full participation of an EC representative.

Our political correspondent points out that the position of the Arab countries, as represented in the British message, is the one Baker will present next week when he visits our region.

Jerusalem political sources believe that the U.S. secretary of state plans to apply considerable pressure on the decisionmakers in Israel to agree to the inclusion of the United Nations in the political moves as an unequivocal Arab condition.

"I found in the Arab countries readiness to take advantage of the opportunity enveloped in U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's initiative to enter into a meaningful peace process," the British foreign secretary wrote to Levi.

As for Saudi Arabia's position, Hurd wrote that "the Saudis are prepared to play an assisting role, even vis-a-vis Syria. The Saudis firmly support Baker's endeavors, but in the absence of a joint border with Israel they see no place for themselves around the negotiating table."

The British foreign secretary points out that the Saudis' activity "behind the scenes" will be very valuable.

Unlike this readiness, however, Hurd reports that the Arab countries are refusing to take "confidence-building" measures toward Israel, as the Americans had requested.

The British secretary concluded his message to Levi by saying: "I believe the coming crucial days must be exploited to search for ways to promote the peace moves." [passage omitted]

[Tel Aviv HATZOFE in Hebrew on 9 May in a page one report by an unnamed "political correspondent" in Jerusalem says that "early information received in Israel on Baker's trips to the Arab countries indicates that he had obtained from these countries an agreement not to make the holding of a regional conference conditional upon Israel's acceptance of the principle of territory for peace. They also reportedly agreed to defer negotiations over Jerusalem until the conclusion of the negotiations.

["The Arab countries likewise do not object to the United States providing Israel with guarantees regarding its demand that the conference would not have the power to enforce its resolutions and that the superpowers would not apply political or economic pressure on Israel during the negotiations.

["Nonetheless, Syria adheres to its position that the regional conference should not adjourn after the opening session." It says that Syria believes that "the negotiations should be held as international arbitration, not direct negotiations. Syria demands that the United Nations serve as arbiter." As for Saudi Arabia, it says, "there is no chance that it would participate in the peace process."]

Jordanians Building Lookout Posts Along Border

TA0805115091 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 8 May 91 p A3

[Report by military correspondent Eytan Rabin]

[Text] The Jordanian authorities have started building more than 10 military positions and lookout posts along the border with Israel in a bid to prevent infiltrations by terrorists and Jordanian soldiers, Israeli military sources announced.

The sources disclosed that in the aftermath of the message delivered by U.S. Secretary of State Baker from Prime Minister Shamir and Defense Minister Arens to King Husayn, saying Israel would not tolerate any more infiltration from Jordanian territory, the Jordanians began a massive construction drive along the Jordan River. Troops loyal to the king will be stationed in the new lookout posts.

Sources in Israel emphasize that the Jordanians are trying very hard to prevent infiltration. They have destroyed a lot of vegetation and have paved dirt roads to improve vision along the border. Nevertheless, the question of the quality of the units deployed along the border, which are made up mostly of second-rate troops who might allow extremist Muslim soldiers to cross into Israel, has not yet been solved.

Another problem is the popular army. In the wake of the Gulf war, King Husayn issued Kalashnikov rifles to thousands of citizens. The recent infiltrations near Kibbutz Neve Ur were by members of the popular army.

Chief of Staff Ehud Baraq and Defense Minister Arens have recently stated that troops and patrols have also been reinforced on the Israeli side of the border. A senior military source said yesterday: "Neither we nor the Jordanians can seal the border hermetically, but there is no doubt that through mutual cooperation we can reduce the number of infiltrations and instill a sense of security in the settlements along the border."

Libya Said To Increase Aid to Territory Residents

TA0805125591 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic 6 May 91 p 1

[Text] A senior Palestinian source has said that Libya has agreed to support many of the institutions in the occupied territories through the PLO. The source added that Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi has issued instructions for increasing financial aid to the Palestinian people as compensation for losses inflicted on them as a result of the Gulf war.

Visiting Polish Minister Collapses, Hospitalized

TA0905112591 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 9 May 91 p 1

[Text] Visiting Polish Tourism Minister Marek Rostworowski collapsed yesterday during a lecture at Jerusalem's Van Leer Institute. He broke a toe in his fall.

He was taken by ambulance to Hadassah Hospital, 'En Kerem, where he was being examined last night. His condition was reported as good.

Fewer, More Elite Troops Set For Use in Territories

TA0805120291 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 8 May 91 p A1

[Report by 'Imanu'el Rosen]

[Text] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has decided on a new operational policy in the territories. According to the new policy, there will be fewer troops, military posts, and patrols along the roads. On the other hand, the IDF will reinforce elite units to be used for special missions.

Reinforcing those units will provide for, among other things, a reduction in the number of troops in the territories and the patrols along the roads. The policy fits in with the IDF's general plan to cut the number of troops assigned to daily security missions in the territories.

31 New Factory Permits Granted in Territories

TA0805164991 Jerusalem GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICE in English 8 May 91

[Communicated by the Civil Administration spokesman]

[Text] The head of the Civil Administration in Judaea and Samaria, Brig.-Gen. Gadi Zohar, today granted 31 permits for the establishment of factories in Judaea and Samaria within the policy of providing employment to hundreds of laborers and to assist the development of the economy and industry in the region. The 31 permits include 10 factories in the construction sector, six in the raw materials sector and textile and pharmaceutical plants.

In his speech, the head of the Civil Administration disclosed that within the framework of developing the economy of Judaea and Samaria, a new law will be passed shortly that will encourage investment and grant special concessions and tax breaks to any new factory that will be

established in the area. The Civil Administration is also considering additional requests which have been submitted by local residents to establish new factories.

These will be approved shortly. The head of the Civil Administration appealed to entrepreneurs and businessmen to initiate projects in order to create employment in the region.

The granting of permits for the establishment of factories was met by interest among the residents of Judaea and Samaria who welcomed it and appealed that additional factories be established in order to improve the economic situation.

Plan To Add 36,000 Apartments to Jerusalem Area

TA0905093991 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 9 May 91 p 7

[Report by Roni Shaqed and Gad Li'or]

[Text] Approximately 1,500 apartments—in addition to the existing 6,500—are under construction in the Jerusalem-area West Bank satellite towns of Ma'ale Adumim, Giv'at Ze'ev, and Betar.

In 1991-1992 the Construction and Housing Ministry plans to complete another 2,570 apartments, of which 1,200 will be in Ma'ale Adumim, 300 in Giv'at Ze'ev, 170 in Efrat, 400 in Betar, and 500 in the settlement of Adam.

In 1990 the Ministry completed work on 2,700 apartments inside the Jerusalem area of jurisdiction and the new neighborhoods, and in fiscal 1991 it plans to complete building another 4,300 units in Pisgat Ze'ev, Shu'fat, Manhat, and Masu'a. The plan calls for another 4,000 apartments in the city's old neighborhoods.

The construction of the new neighborhood of Har Homa, with 8,000 planned apartments, and the additional construction work in the new neighborhoods will add to Jerusalem and its satellite towns some 36,000 apartments in the next four years.

[In a map appended to the above item, data is provided for some Jerusalem neighborhoods, broken down into the categories: "Existing Housing Units, Units Under Construction, and Units Planned for 91/92." The figures below, for each neighborhood respectively, correspond to the above categories: Adam—45, 45, 500; Ma'ale Adumim—3,300, 2,000, 1,200; Efrat—450, 100, 170; Betar—300, 500, 400; Giv'at Ze'ev—1,050, 100, 300]

Soviet Foreign Minister Arrives on 2-Day Visit

JN0905091591 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 0900 GMT 9 May 91

[Text] Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh arrived in Amman this morning on a two-day visit to Jordan during which he will meet with senior officials to discuss the developments in the region and finding a peaceful settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestine question.

The Soviet minister was received at Amman airport by Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri, the Foreign Ministry's secretary general, the heads of the Foreign Ministry's Political and Protocol Departments, the Jordanian ambassador to Moscow, and the Soviet ambassador in Amman.

Mr. Bessmertnykh is accompanied by a delegation comprised of a number of senior Soviet Foreign Ministry officials, including the head of the Near East and North African Department and the head of the Information Department.

Al-Masri Views Visit

JN0905060091 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 9-10 May 91 pp 1, 5

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter Nirmin Murad]

[Excerpt] Amman—Jordan places great importance on the Soviet role in Middle East talks because the Soviet Union can pressure Israel with halting Soviet Jewish immigration to Israel, a senior cabinet minister said Wednesday.

Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri, told the JORDAN TIMES in an interview that the Soviet Union holds "a very important card because it can control the massive influx of Soviet Jews into Israel."

His comments came on the eve of Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh's scheduled two-day visit to Jordan during which he is to hold talks with His Majesty King Husayn and Jordanian officials.

Bessmertnykh's visit to Jordan comes as part of a four-nation tour which has already taken him to Damascus and is expected to include Israel and Egypt.

Al-Masri also pointed to the prominence of the Soviet role in efforts to broker a peaceful settlement to the Palestinian problem and the Arab-Israeli conflict in its capacity as "a partner of the U.S. in peace efforts and co-sponsor of the proposed peace conference."

The United States has launched efforts to bring Israel and the Arabs to a negotiating table, under the direct sponsorship of the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

U.S. President George Bush has called for a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict based on U.N. resolution 242 and 338 which call on Israel to withdraw from the lands it occupied in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war in exchange for peace.

Jordan has welcomed these efforts and the idea of a conference but stressed the need to pressure Israel into accepting international legitimacy and ending Jewish settlements in the occupied Arab territories of the West Bank and Gaza.

A senior Jordanian official, who has requested anonymity, told the JORDAN TIMES that Jordan expected the Soviet Union would exert pressure on Israel by waving the card of Soviet Jewish immigration.

The official said Soviet leaders have already asked the Palestine Liberation Organisation to "pave the road to peace and adopt a low key role in the preliminary negotiations."

"If the Soviet Union can ask the PLO to do that they can also use the same type of pressure on Israel," the official told the JORDAN TIMES.

The PLO and Jordan want full role for the organisation in the Middle East peace process but the United States and Israel reject PLO participation.

Jordan has expressed readiness to enter negotiation with a joint- Palestinian delegation if asked by the PLO, but the organisation so far insists on an independent delegation.

"This is a principled position," the Jordanian official said of the PLO's call for an independent delegation," but if there were concrete developments on the substance of a peaceful resolution, a joint delegation may become acceptable to the PLO."

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker has already shuttled the region three times during the past two months and is scheduled to return to the Middle East Friday.

Baker is also planning to meet Bessmertnykh in Cairo Sunday. [passage omitted]

U.S. Said Diverting Ship From Al-'Aqabah

JN0905062291 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 9 May 91 p 1

[Text] Amman—SAWT AL-SHA'B has learned that the U.S. Marines holding the Algerian vessel Uryus [name as published] since last week in the territorial waters in the Red Sea are refusing to allow the vessel to proceed to al-'Aqabah port.

SAWT AL-SHA'B also learned that the Marines have decided to divert the vessel to one of the Arab coalition countries' ports for thorough searching.

'Abd-al-Majid's AL Nomination Said Backed

JN0905065191 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 9 May 91 p 1

[By Muhammad 'Ubaydat]

[Text] Jordan is expected to approve the nomination of Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid to the post of Arab League [AL] secretary general to succeed Chedli Klibi who resigned this post in September 1990.

An official Jordanian source told SAWT AL-SHA'B that an official memo of Jordan's approval has been sent to the Arab League General Secretariat.

In a related development, political sources have asserted that Iraq is expected to announce its approval of 'Abd-al-Majid's nomination during the Arab foreign minister's meeting in Cairo on 15 May as part of the Iraqi trend to heal the Arab rift.

In order to win the post, 'Abd-al-Majid needs the approval of 13 member states out of the Arab League's 21 members.

Government Accused of Misusing Gulf War Aid Funds

JN0905064191 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 9-10 May 91 pp 1, 5

["Special" to the JORDAN TIMES by Slamah Ni'mat]

[Text] Amman—The government Wednesday concluded consultations with an IMF team, paving the way for renegotiating its debt-servicing agreement programme in the wake of the Gulf crisis.

But financial and parliamentary sources accused the government of using foreign aid given to help the economic sectors, hit by the eight-month Gulf ciris, to cover its budget deficit and balance fiscal policies "to please the IMF at the expense of the national economy."

However, Michel Marto, deputy governor of the Central Bank of Jordan said the IMF team, which concluded consultations with the government Wednesday, was expected to return later to renegotiate Jordan's debt-servicing agreement and structural adjustment programme.

He told the JORDAN TIMES that the IMF was "satisfied that we are serious about our fiscal policy and that the country is not wasting its money."

Despite the colossal damage to the economy, Dr. Marto said, Jordan remained on schedule in servicing around half of its foreign debt. Dr. Marto said the government was honouring commitments to several Arab and foreign funds, thanks to nearly $1 billion in foreign aid.

Marto said the IMF was also pleased with Jordan's monetary policies and the government's ability to maintain the stability of the dinar and commodity prices despite the devastating effects of the Gulf crisis.

The Central Bank deputy governor said the economy suffered an eight per cent "real decline" in the gross domestic product (GDP). Considering a four per cent average population growth rate, the GDP decline translates into a 12 per cent decline in the Kingdom's per capita income.

"It appears the economy is more resilient than we originally thought considering the circumstances," Marto said, striking a note of optimism. "But we have to recognise the good support that Jordan received," he added, referring to foreign aid paid to the Kingdom.

The government had allocated JD [Jordanian dinars] 120 million for additional spending in an emergency budget included in the 1991 national budget, to be covered from foreign aid.

But financial sources, including officials who spoke to the Jordan Times, said the government was using the foreign aid received to compensate economic sectors damaged by the Gulf crisis to cover its estimated JD 355 million budget deficit in addition to the JD 120 million emergency spending.

"This is not what the government was supposed to do," a prominent financial source said. "We asked the United Nations for funds to compensate the sectors which suffered, such as transport, tourism, agriculture and industry," the source said. "These sectors, which were supposed to receive $800 million, have literally received nothing."

The source explained that the private sector, which was the biggest loser in the Gulf crisis, "received nothing in terms of tax breaks, a rescheduling of private debts and other creative ways to compensate the private sector.

"We are not asking for cash handouts," the source said. "We were hoping that the aid would be used to revive the economy rather than to please the IMF."

A parliament deputy charged that the government was "sticking letter and soul with the IMF agreement."

He said it has been doing the things that help its image with the IMF rather than the economy as a whole. They "practically used the misery of the private sector to get funds to cover the budget deficit," the deputy added.

He said a parliamentary debate over how and where the foreign aid would be spent was delayed until the last session of parliament so that not enough time was left to discuss it adequately.

Marto said Jordan has already received more than half the aid earmarked for jordan from Japan, the European Community, Germany, France and Holland and was scheduled to receive an additional $60 million from the World Bank to be dispersed over the next year and a half.

He did not say how the money would be used, but pointed out that the government has already started spending from the JD 120 million emergency budget to invest in productive sectors.

A financial source said that of all sectors in the economy, the tourism sector suffered the most due to the total collapse of the hotel industry except for two hotels in the Kingdom which benefited from journalists who came to cover the Gulf crisis. He explained that a whole network of tourist facilities, such as transport (Jetbuses), restaurants and other support industries were devastated.

"The tourism and transport sectors are the worst victims, not the industry," he explained. "The industry suffered less because Iraq eventually consumed most of our industrial output," he said. "But tourism and transport were left with almost nothing."

The source agreed with critics of the government saying that it had its priorities wrong. "With unemployment at 30 to 40 per cent and the standards of living going so low, I think the government should open up and tell us what it is planning to do with the money apart from covering the deficit and looking good in front of creditors."

Agreement Said Reached for Release of Hostages

NC0905063991 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0515 GMT 9 May 91

[Text] Citing informed sources, press reports today indicated that the release of foreign hostages in Lebanon will take place as part of a deal under which Israel will release its Lebanese and Palestinian detainees. The reports added that negotiations have concluded with an agreement to this effect, but no date has been fixed.

Soviet Ambassador on 12 May Bessmertnykh Visit

NC0805124191 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Soviet Ambassador Gennadiy Ilichev stated this afternoon that Soviet Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh will arrive in Lebanon on Sunday, 12 May, barring any change in his itinerary.

Speaking after a meeting with Foreign Ministry Secretary General Suhayl Shammas today, Ilichev said he had discussed the visit with Ambassador Shammas. He added: I can say that our minister is eager to visit Lebanon, and the Lebanese state welcomes such a visit. This means that there is full agreement, he added, but some purely technical difficulties may have some influence on the final decision on this matter. We are confident, however, that everything will go as planned, he added.

Asked what he meant by technical difficulties, Ilichev said: There may be some change in his itinerary.

[Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic at 1200 GMT on 8 May adds: "Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh arrived this afternoon in Damscus, the first stop in his Middle East tour, which will take him to Beirut on Sunday."]

Hizballah's Al-Tufayli Condemns 'Rotten Regime'

NC0805131491 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Hizballah Secretary General His Eminence Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli has criticized the Lebanese regime and accused it of colluding against Islamic and national resistance.

He said that all free and honest Lebanese who resisted the Zionist enemy and silenced the American occupier should have been supported, and that the state should have backed the mujahidin in driving out the invader. He added: We note that the Lebanese regime is acting suspiciously against the forces of the Islamic resistance and other resistance groups by arresting some of them, seizing their weapons in the occupied strip area, and laying charges against the mujahidin who offered their blood to liberate our land and people. Instead of giving them medals and holding them up as examples to be followed, some people associated with the Zionist enemy turn the mujahidin into outlaws pursued by the rotten regime, for the replacement of which we have called.

He said that all members of this regime, from its head down to the snakes who spew forth their poison in a desperate effort to bring back the odious sectarian system, must realize they will not succeed in their plot against the people who are confronting the usurping enemy. They must yield to the will of the honest resistance men because their dreams will not survive long. His eminence remarked that instead of pursuing the honest resistance men, they should seek to solve people's problems and to provide water and electricity. Noting that he does not expect this regime to solve these problems, he held it responsible for fomenting sedition in villages through the municipalities and heads of villages act at a time when we need to unite and to heal wounds.

He emphasized that this regime will produce only poison and corruption because it is full of these two elements. He said: We call for a regime in which sectarianism and its symbols will have no place, from the president of the republic on down, and which will be elected by the people.

About the resistance and the talk about eliminating it, al-Tufayli said:

[Begin al-Tufayli recording] There is talk about the issue of Zionism and the need to halt operations and take away the resistance's weapons so that the Zionist enemy will have no excuse to remain in Lebanon. These people who think that the Zionist enemy came to Lebanon because some acts here annoyed him are in an awkward position. They believe that the Zionist enemy will withdraw from Lebanese territory if it feels secure from the danger in Lebanon, as if the aggressor were this oppressed people, this resisting man with his primitive weapons, and as if the Zionist enemy were acting in self-defense. This notion is a Zionist one that serves the Zionist enemy's plans. No honest man will accept it. On the contrary, we must support resistance against the enemy and force him to forsake our cherished land in Lebanon and Palestine because this land must return to its owners, the Muslims.

The enemy openly declares that he will not withdraw from this land, either in Lebanon or anywhere else. Is it reasonable for us to expect such generosity from the enemy? We have not seen any signs of it, and we never will. We must rely on ourselves and on our will, as well as on the will of the heroes of the Islamic resistance and the heroes of resistance in general to confront the occupying and usurping enemy.

In this context, we regard all attempts to impose a peace with the Israeli enemy on our people and on Muslims generally as an attempt to impose surrender, to impose a recognition of defeat and the de facto situation. We are sure that there is a strong determination among our people and among the pious resistance men allied with those of our people who refuse to allow history to record that they neglected their central cause or that they wavered in defending the nation's pride and land. [end recording]

Lahd on Possible Request for Israeli Help

NC0905072991 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 0430 GMT 9 May 91

[Text] Antoine Lahd, commander of the South Lebanese Army, has warned that he may request military assistance from Israel if the Lebanese authorities try to take control of the Jazzin area. Lahd was speaking while on a tour of the area accompanied by Yitzhaq Mordakhay, commander of the so-called northern sector.

Lahd maintained that nothing can be settled in the Jazzin area until the Sidon and Iqlim al-Tuffah issues are resolved. He added: We hope the Lebanese Army will manage to gain control over the fundamentalists and the Palestinians. He claimed that all the Lebanese Army has managed to do so far is to give the fundamentalists and the Palestinians greater freedom of movement.

Iranian Charge d'Affaires Views Arms Handover

NC0805120891 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1030 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Mohammad Javad Zamaniyan, the Iranian charge d'affaires in Lebanon, has stressed that the Islamic Republic of Iran supports all measures to establish peace and stability in Lebanon.

Asked about the collection of weapons from the Iranian Revolution Guards in al-Biqa', the Iranian charge said that any step in this regard would be subject to study and discussions. He ruled out any possibility of the Zionist entity's implementing UN Security Council Resolution 425, which calls for the Israeli enemy to withdraw from the south.

The Iranian charge was speaking after a meeting with Trade Minister Marwan Hamadah today, at which they discussed relations between Lebanon and Iran, particularly in the economic field. Minister Hamadah was invited to visit Iran.

The Iranian charge later visited President Ilyas al-Hirawi.

Foreign Minister Returns From Damascus

NC0805123891 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz returned to Beirut from Damascus this afternoon. He had traveled to Damascus earlier in the day for talks with his Syrian counterpart Faruq al-Shar' and Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam. On his way to Damascus, Buwayz stopped in Shtawrah and met with Minister of State 'Abdallah al-Amin. The two traveled to the Syrian capital together.

Palestinians Arrested; PLO Intervenes in Clash

NC0905062091 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0315 GMT 9 May 91

[Text] Citing Lebanese judicial sources, REUTER reports that the Lebanese Army arrested two Palestinians on the Beirut-Sidon road for possession of unlicensed weapons. According to the press agency, the gunmen belong to the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

REUTER also cites a security source as saying that one person was killed and two others were wounded when gunmen from the Islamic Unification Movement clashed with machine guns near the al-Miyah Wa Miyah camp in the Sidon suburbs. The press agency adds that a PLO force intervened and contained the dispute.

Israeli, Lahd Forces Shell Southern Towns

NC0905085791 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0800 GMT 9 May 91

[Text] The southern towns of Kafr Rumman and Habbush came under artillery shelling from positions held by the Israeli occupation forces and agent Lahd's militiamen in the Tuhrah and al-Suwaydah hills early today. Citizen Husayn Ahmad Shakarun was wounded. Civil defense and Red Cross teams are working to put out fires at a number of houses and shops. The shelling also damaged many cars, severed telephone lines, and destroyed crops.

Hizballah Claims Attack on Israeli Positions

NC0905094391 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0845 GMT 9 May 91

[Text] Intermittent clashes involving automatic weapons and rockets are taking place on the Kafr Falus, Lib'a, and 'Ayn al-Mir combat lines between the South Lebanese Army and various organizations.

Hizballah's information department has issued a statement saying that a joint group of the Islamic resistance and the Amal Movement attacked Israeli positions on the Tuhrah hill. Heavy fighting ensued. The statement added that members of the attacking group returned safely to their bases.

Reportage on Visit by Soviet Foreign Minister

Meets Al-Asad

JN0805185291 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1815 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] At 1730 today, President Hafiz al-Asad received Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksndr Bessmertnykh and his delegation. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and Soviet Ambassador in Damascus Aleksandr Zotov.

Bessmertnykh conveyed to the president the greetings of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. The president accepted the greetings thankfully and asked him to convey his greetings to President Gorbachev, the Soviet leadership, and the peoples of the friendly Soviet Union.

They discussed the situation in the region, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the ideas proposed to launch a peace process in the region that would lead to establishing just and comprehensive peace.

To 'Press' Israel

JN0805161491 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1515 GMT 8 May 91

[Excerpts] Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh and his delegation arrived in Damascus this afternoon on a two-day visit to Syria. He was welcomed at Damascus International Airport by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', the directors of the East European and Protocol Departments at the Foreign Ministry, the Soviet ambassador in Damascus, and embassy staff.

Mr. Bessmertnykh made a statement to the press following his arrival. [passage omitted]

Responding to another question on whether the Soviet Union will adopt specific measures to pressure Israel into accepting the terms of a just settlement, the Soviet foreign minister said: I am looking forward to holding tangible and important discussions in this regard. We will learn from the Israeli side their position on this issue. He stressed that he will press the need to accept the Soviet viewpoint that makes it possible to achieve peace.

Asked whether there are joint U.S.-Soviet efforts in search of peace in the Middle East region, Mr. Bessmertnykh said: There are joint Soviet-U.S. efforts, as well as efforts by all concerned Arab countries. We must seize this opportunity to advance the peace process.

Role in Peace Process Viewed

JN0805151291 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1415 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] An official round of talks was held at the Foreign Ministry this afternoon between Syria, represented by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', and the Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh. Taking part in the talks for the Syrian Arab side were Yusuf Shakkur, assistant foreign minister; Anwar Shaykhuni, director of the Palestine Department; Najdi al-Jazzar, director of the Organizations Department; Yusuf Jum'ah, director of the Information Department; and Ghassan Rislan, director of the East Europe Department. The talks were attended on the Soviet side by Churkin, chief of the Information Administration; Kolotusha, chief of the Near Eastern and North African Countries Administration; Mamedov, chief of the United States of America and Canada Administration; and Aleksandr Zotov, Soviet ambassador in Damascus.

During the meeting, the two sides exchanged views and ideas on developments in the region and the international efforts to achieve a just, durable, and comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute and the Palestine question on the basis of implementing UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338. Discussions dealt with the Soviet Union's role and efforts in the peace process. Talks also touched on bilateral relations and promoting them in various fields.

Views 'Identical'

JN0905060791 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0415 GMT 9 May 91

[Excerpts] President Hafiz al-Asad last night received Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh and his delegation. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and Soviet Ambassador in Damascus Aleksandr Zotov. [passage omitted]

Mr. Bessmertnykh explained Soviet views on the Middle East peace mechanism, requirements, and framework. The president stressed Syria's eagerness for a just and comprehensive peace based on UN resolutions on the Arab-Israeli conflict, especially Resolutions 242 and 338. The president also stressed Syria's readiness to cooperate with any serious international efforts seeking to entrench international legitimacy and using single standards in dealing with the various regional and international issues. Viewpoints were identical on the need for work to ensure the suitable framework and the necessary requirements for pushing forward the process of a just and comprehensive peace.

Departs 9 May

JN0905094091 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0915 GMT 9 May 91

[Text] Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh and his delegation left Damascus this morning following a two-day visit to Syria, during which he met with President Hafiz al-Asad and held talks with Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'.

He was seen off at Damascus International Airport by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'; the heads of the Foreign Ministry's East Europe, Protocol, and Information departments; and the Soviet ambassador in Damascus and Embassy staff.

Al-Shar' and Aleksandr Bessmertnykh answered journalists' questions and stressed that the talks were very positive, constructive, and very friendly.

Al-Shar' asserted that viewpoints on the peace process were identical, especially regarding the structure of the international peace conference, the participation of the United Nations and the European community, and the continuity of the conference. He said he believes the visit was important because the Soviet Union and the United States have an important responsibility to push forward the peace process and convene the international conference that is based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

Al-Shar' stressed the need for Palestinian participation in this conference through the PLO or to hold free and fair elections under international supervision through which all Palestinians can choose who will represent them at the conference.

Asked about the mechanism of the peace process in the Middle East and the Soviet concept of this mechanism, Mr. Bessmertnykh said: The mechanism that concerns us now concentrates on the peace conference in the Middle East which we believe is very important to start the peace process.

Asked about the difficulties that may face the peace process, Mr. Bessmertnykh said: At the beginning of my tour, I have not found many difficulties in Damascus.

Mr. Bessmertnykh arrived in Amman on a 24-hour visit to Jordan. The Soviet minister will discuss with Jordanian officials the current efforts to achieve a peaceful solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Soviet Union's role in the expected peace process, as well as bilateral ties.

Al-Shar', Lebanese Ministers View Peace Efforts

JN0805161991 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1515 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Damascus—Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' received at noon today Faris Buwayz, Lebanese minister of foreign affairs and expatriates, and 'Abdallah al-Amin, Lebanese minister of state.

They discussed developments in the region and international efforts to establish a just and comprehensive peace for the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestine question. Al-Shar' and Buwayz also exchanged views and consulted on the agenda of the Arab League meeting to be held in Cairo on 15 May.

Big Powers Urged To Apply Pressure on Israel

JN0905081191 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0445 GMT 9 May 91

[From the press review]

[Text] Under the headline "Credibility of International Legitimacy Is Put to the Test," AL-BA'TH says in its editorial today that with the arrival of the Soviet foreign minister in the region and the combination of U.S. and Soviet efforts to launch the Middle East peace process, international diplomatic activity reaches an advanced stage in an attempt to contain the most dangerous point of tension and explosion in the world. Indeed, for the first time in the region's history, world forces exert common efforts to extinguish the fires of the longstanding conflict and push the peace process forward.

AL-BA'TH says that the picture in the region is crystal clear to the entire world; there are no obscurities or puzzles. It points out Israel's intransigence, arrogant defiance of international resolutions, and attempts to place obstacles in the way of international peace efforts. AL-BA'TH asks: For how long will the world's patience with Israel's rulers continue? And for how long will these rulers be allowed to defy world conventions and laws? But the bigger question posed to the United Nations, the United States, and the Soviet Union, says the paper, is: Will there be two standards, two criteria, and two scales in dealing with the Middle East, the first for the Arabs and all peoples and the other for defiant Israel?

Concluding, AL-BA'TH says that world legitimacy is being put to the test, and the Middle East is the scene of this major test. The big powers that are concerned about legitimacy must prove that this legitimacy is able to survive against the proponents of the law of jungle and the advocates of wars, expansion, and aggression.

AL-THAWRAH discusses the same subject in one of its commentaries. It is no coincidence, says the paper, that tours of the region, especially recent ones, by senior officials from the East and the West start with visits to the Syrian capital. This was the case with the current visit to Syria by the Soviet foreign minister and with the visit to Damascus a few days ago by the Netherlands foreign minister. The U.S. secretary of state is also expected to start his fourth tour by a visit to Damascus.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Any world official, especially those concerned about a Middle East settlement, can accurately and objectively acquaint himself with the developments in the region and with Syria's firm position and its support for international efforts aimed at achieving a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace for the Arab-Israeli conflict in general, and the Palestine question in particular. Syria has all along been saying that this peace can be achieved on the basis of UN resolutions on the Middle East issue, especially Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, and through a certain mechanism—namely, a peace conference devoted to the Middle East.

AL-THAWRAH concludes that international efforts must now concentrate on Israel—whose intransigence is known to everybody—so that it will reverse its opposition to peace endeavors and implement world resolutions on the Middle East. This is the beginning for asserting the prestige and credibility of the world community.

Under the headline "Concern About Peace," TISHRIN in today's commentary says: No one denies that Syria is very eager to render efforts toward a just and comprehensive peace in the region a success. Nor does anyone deny Syria's important and basic role in launching the peace process. All parties, except Israel, are seeking peace and working to achieve it. When Israel repeats time and again its rejection of a conference to achieve peace based on right, justice,

and stability, it demonstrates its challenge of international legitimacy and its antagonism toward the United Nations and the world community.

The paper concludes: Israel knows before any other party that no peace can be achieved while it is still occupying the Arab territories, and that no peace can possibly allow Israel to implement its aggressive and expansionist designs and its strategy of gradual annexation. Peace cannot be real if it aims to drag the Arabs to capitulation, abandonment of territories, and selling out of rights.

Commentary Stresses 'Continuous' Peace Conference

JN0805143291 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 8 May 91

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: In order for the world's effort to be fruitful as it consolidates the basis of genuine peace in the region and in order to avoid any ambiguity in the peace process being launched today, we in Syria, at every stage of dialogue and through lengthy discussions with the various international parties, have been eager to clarify and explain our viewpoint so as to allow no room for doubt about our desire to establish peace and reach a just and comprehensive solution of all aspects of the conflict in the region on the basis of international legitimacy and UN resolutions.

In his lengthy talks with U.S. Secretary Baker, leader al-Asad defined with his well-known clarity and with the precision required by sincere work in such a situation, Syria's position on all that is being proposed in the dialogue with the various sides, whether with regard to the essence of the crisis or to the procedural aspects of the peace conference.

Perhaps the Palestinian representation at the proposed peace conference was one of the most important issues that Syria wants to stress; that the Palestinians must participate in the peace conference through PLO representatives or Palestinian figures from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip who are directly elected by the Palestinian Arab people in the occupied territories under international supervision.

We say this because we need to reassert, as we have always done, that we are against any unilateral peace that Israel would establish with this or that other Arab side to the exclusion of others. We are not in favor of an Israeli-Palestinian peace as we also do not accept a separate Israeli-Syrian peace or any other separate peace, because this would fragment the cause, employ tricks in dealing with it, and evade tackling it in the useful manner that would really resolve it.

What is being discussed now is holding a peace conference in the Middle East to be attended by all parties concerned with the Arab- Israeli conflict in the region along with international participation of the Soviet Union, the United States, and the European Community under the supervision of the United Nations. It never occurred to us that such a conference would be a ceremonial one to end on the opening day. Rather, it should be continuous until a just and comprehensive solution is reached and the pillars of peace and security in the region are entrenched on the basis of UN resolutions, Resolutions 242 and 338 in particular.

If, through its declared positions and evil maneuvers, Israel wants to waste the world's time by moving from one rejected and denounced for of extremism to another, then, as we know and as the world has began to realize, it is trying to abort Secretary Baker's task and disrupt the peace efforts by pressing ahead with its aggression plan against the Arabs, their land, and their future. Because we want Baker's mission and the international endeavors by various parties to succeed, we can now stress that Israel alone will be held responsible for the failure of this mission and endeavors, because it has always been opposed to peace. Only war and aggression conform with its policy.

Afghanistan

Mujahidin Tighten Siege Around Qandahar City

BK0805153291 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] In Afghanistan, the mujahidin have reportedly tightened their siege around Qandahar, the country's second-largest city. Reports say the Kabul regime is now left with no safe land route to reach supplies to break the siege.

The mujahidin have in the meantime constituted a consultative council, called a shura, that is patterned after the council established in Khowst, which is represented by all seven Afghan organizations as well as some local prominent personalities.

Former Minister Seeks Asylum in Bulgaria

BK0905005691 Hong Kong AFP in English 1822 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Islamabad, May 8 (AFP)—A former Kabul government Minister has fled for Bulgaria amid continuing factional strife in the Afghan ruling Watan Party, Western diplomatic sources said here Wednesday.

They named him as Ghulam Dastageer Panjsheri, ex-minister for public works, and said a number of other former ranking government officials were seeking asylum in Canada.

Hashmat Karhani, a former deputy chief of the Afghan secret service KHAD, was among them, the diplomats said.

The long-running rivalry involves the Khalqi and Parchami factions in Watan, formerly the Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), they said.

Mr. Panjsheri belongs to the Khalq faction. President Najibullah is a Parchami.

Red Cross Doubts Claims of Dead Soviet POW's

BK0805141591 Hong Kong AFP in English 1403 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Islamabad, May 8 (AFP)—The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) cast doubt Wednesday on Afghan rebel claims that 21 Soviet prisoners have died in captivity in a hepatitis epidemic.

"We have no information on this subject," Marco Altherr, head of the ICRC branch in Pakistan, said in an interview.

Western diplomats here were also sceptical of the reports released tuesday in Peshawar by sources close to Afghan fundamentalist guerrillas.

The figure of 21 dead seems "abnormally high," one diplomat said, adding that he doubted the epidemic had caused "so many deaths in so little time."

Afghan rebel sources said the Soviet prisoners had died in captivity during the past four months, especially in the camps of the Hezb-e Eslami party of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.

About 300 Soviet soldiers were reported missing after the Soviet military withdrawal from Afghanistan two years ago, according to Moscow's official figures. About 100 were being held by guerrillas, Western sources in Pakistan said.

Bangladesh

Premier Details Cyclone Relief Operations

BK0705134091 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh External Service in English 1230 GMT 7 May 91

[Text] Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia has said preparation of a master for relief and rehabilitation needs of Bangladesh is at the final stage and will be ready by Thursday. Speaking at a crowded news conference at the international conference center in Dhaka Tuesday, she said relief operations have further been intensified by reaching relief teams and materials to all cyclone-affected areas. Airdropping of relief materials are being made in all inaccessible areas and 17 helicopters have now been engaged in the airdropping operation. The prime minister said general kitchens have been opened in the worst affected areas from where water has receded. Meanwhile, rehabilitation and reconstruction works have been taken up in the affected areas.

Begum Zia said supply of water and electricity has largely been restored in the heavily damaged port city of Chittagong. The city airport has been made fully operational and seaport partially. A channel to the port has been opened, which is navigable for limited [word indistinct] vessels and the government has already appealed to friendly countries to help in salvaging sunken ships to make the port fully operational. She said civil servants, NGO's [nongovernment organizations], members of the defense services, BDR [Bangladesh Rifles], police, Ansars [civil defense volunteers], and VDP [Village Defense Party] have also launched themselves into relief operation. She said many brotherly and friendly countries have extended spontaneous help and support at this hour of distress. She expressed the confidence that international community will stand by Bangladesh and extend support and help to the democratically elected government to face the present catastrophe and implement rehabilitation and reconstruction programs.

Official: 50 Billion Taka Needed

BK0705161691 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 7 May 91

[Text] At a news conference in Dhaka this evening, the information secretary, Kazi Manzoor A. Maula, gave a detailed account of the relief operation in the cyclone-affected areas today. He said helicopters today flew over 15 sorties to drop 40 tons of cooked food in Chittagong region. Relief goods dispatched by road to Chittagong and Noakhali today included three truckloads of chira [flattened rice], one truckload of gur [molasses], two truckloads of saris, 1,000 pieces of blankets, 10,000 pieces of children's clothes, 20,000 pieces of old clothes, and 1,000 pieces of utensils. The information secretary said 200

mechanics and technicians are working for restoration of water supply in the coastal belt. Twenty-two truckloads of tubewell materials were also sent to Chittagong today.

He also gave an account of the damage and destruction caused in the agriculture, livestock, education, and infrastructure sectors. The information secretary said over 2,000 educational institutions were completely damaged, while the number of institutions partially damaged is 3,920. Fifty bridges and culverts were completely damaged. One hundred and twenty-two miles of coastal embankments were completely washed away.

The information secretary said 5,042 crore taka is needed for relief and rehabilitation of the cyclone-affected people. Of this 2,393 crore taka is needed immediately for relief, repair, and restoration of services in the affected areas.

India

Further Reportage on Visiting DPRK Delegation

Yi Chong-ok Meets Venkataraman

BK0805133291 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] The visiting vice president of North Korea Mr. Yi Chong-ok called on the president, Mr. R. Venkataraman, at Rashtrapati Bhavan [President's House] today. Both the leaders discussed a wide range of subjects including bilateral relations and the situation in the region. Mr. Yi Chong-ok commended India's achievements in the economic and other fields. He expressed the hope that the Kashmir problem will be solved amicably in the spirit of the Simla Agreement. Mr. Venkataraman said both India and Korea enjoyed traditional friendly ties which have been strengthened over the years.

Seeks Support for UN Membership

BK0805162591 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] North Korea has sought India's support in gaining entry into the United Nations. The matter was raised by the visiting North Korean vice president, Mr. Yi Chong-ok, during his meetings with the president, Mr. Venkataraman, and the vice president, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, in New Delhi today. During his separate meetings, Mr. Yi Chong-ok had wide-ranging talks covering bilateral relations and the situation in the region. He commended India's achievements in the economic and other fields and praised the country's democratic and socialist fabric. He expressed the hope that the Kashmir problem will be solved amicably in the spirit of the Simla agreement.

The visiting vice president conveyed to Mr. Venkatarman the presonal greetings of the North Korean president, Mr. Kim Il-Song, and extended an invitation to Mr. Venkataraman to pay a state visit to his country. Mr. Venkataraman reciprocated the greetings and said both India and Korea enjoy traditional friendly ties which have been strengthened over the years. The president hosted a lunch in honor of the visiting dignitary.

Sharma Hosts Delegation

BK0905051091 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0435 GMT 9 May 91

[Text] India has called upon North and South Korea to address the issue of representation at the United Nations in the spirit of trust and confidence and to find a mutually acceptable solution. Speaking at a dinner hosted in honor of the visiting North Korean vice president, Mr. Yi Chong-ok, in New Delhi last night, the Vice President Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma expressed the hope that both the countries will be reunited soon. The vice president recalled the close ties between India and North Korea and expressed the desire to work together for a just and equitable new world order in a changing international situation.

Reportage on Preelection Violence in Punjab

State Assembly Candidate Killed

BK0805131691 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] In Punjab, an Akali Dal-Badal candidate for the assembly elections in Sangrur District is reported killed by the militants today. According to police in Chandigarh, two unidentified gunmen shot dead Mr. Darbara Singh, who was a candidate for the Dhannala assembly seat from Longowal village.

Police Official Killed

BK0805131891 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] In Punjab, the deputy inspector general of police, border range, Mr. Ajit Singh, was killed in a fierce encounter with militants at Rataul village of Tarn Taran police district this afternoon. He was injured while supervising the operations against militants and later succumbed to his injuries at a hospital in Amritsar. A senior superintendent of police and three other security personnel have been injured. The encounter which started late last night is still continuing.

Minister on 'Law and Order Situation'

BK0805163091 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Mr. Subodh Kant [minister of state for home affairs] today reviewed the general law and order situation in various parts of the country with senior central and state officials. He told newsmen later that 448 Lok Sabha constituencies all over the country have been identified as sensitive. Out of these, nearly 80 are considered very sensitive. He said paramilitary forces are under full movement and 350 companies have already been deployed in various parts in the first phase.

On Punjab, the minister said there is no negligence on the part of the center to improve the law and order front. A full-scale operation has been mounted since yesterday evening against the militants in the Tarn Taran area which is the worst affected.

About Kashmir, Mr. Subodh Kant said a very successful operation has been launched against the Pakistan-trained militants and about 80 of them have been killed in the Kupwara sector.

In reply to a question, the minister said the government is considering an ordinance to amend the electoral law not to countermand elections in a constituency following the death of a candidate not belonging to any recognized political party.

5 Soldiers, 7 Militants Killed

BK0905075291 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 9 May 91

[Text] In Punjab, the encounter between militants and the security forces, which started on Tuesday [7 May] afternoon in Rataul village of Amritsar District ended this morning. According to an official spokesman in Chandigarh, seven militants and five security force personnel were killed in the encounter. Eight security force personnel were injured. An intensive search has been launched in the village and recovery of some more bodies cannot be ruled out. The arms and ammunition so far recovered include one general purpose machine gun, four AK-47 rifles and one self-loading rifle and one pistol.

24 People Killed in Kashmir; Border Shooting Stops

BK0805160691 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] In the Kashmir Valley, 24 persons including 17 militants were killed, while the security forces recovered a large quantity of arms and ammunition during a search at various places. Five of the militants were killed in the 5-km border belt, while 10 others were killed in encounters with security forces in different parts of Srinagar today. A self-styled area commander of a terrorist group—Hizbul Mujahidin—was killed in Kupwara District this morning. Security forces arrested three infiltrators in the border belt and recovered arms from them. Seven were apprehended earlier.

As already reported, 73 bodies of militants killed in an encounter last Sunday [5 May] have been recovered. An official spokesman said in New Delhi today that the firing which was continuing for the last four days across the Line of Control has stopped. The bodies of the killed militants will be buried in the same area with proper religious rites as these cannot be brought to Srinagar because of the extremely difficult terrain. This was stated by a spokesman of the Jammu and Kashmir government.

9 Killed, 25 Injured in Cross Fire

BK0905031291 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 9 May 91

[Text] In Kashmir valley, nine persons were killed and 25 injured in cross-firing between the security forces and militants in (Kaniar) locality of Srinagar yesterday evening. According to an official spokesman a party of the security forces patrolling the area came under heavy firing by the militants. The security forces returned the fire. The spokesman said there will be no relaxation in (Kaniar) and adjoining interior areas of old Srinagar city today.

* Reportage on Congress-I Election Campaign

* Draft Manifesto

91AS0859A Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 8 Apr 91 p 4

[Article by Yubaraj Ghimire: "Congress Promises Stability, Growth, Equity"]

[Text] New Delhi, April 7: "A vote for the hand is a vote for stability, a vote for growth, a vote for equity and a vote for participation in power." The Congress says "no" to power brokers. "Power is with the people." The promises in these slogans from the crux of the 35-page draft manifesto of the Congress(I).

The party, through the manifesto drafted on March 27, promises that every Indian will be above the poverty line by the turn of the century. It stands for ensuring economic opportunity for all, accelerated poverty eradication, priority to employment, dynamism in agriculture, industry and infrastructure.

"Ensuring access for all to opportunities for individual advancement, and special measures in favour of disadvantaged social groups such as Harijans, Adivasis, other backward classes and women of all classes" is another major problem.

The party commits itself for devolution of democracy to Panchayati Raj institutions and Nagarpalikas with reservations for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and women and, as decided by the state government, "for backward classes too."

More than positive promises, the party dwells on the failure of the non- Congress(I) governments in the country which have ruled together for four years in two instalments. "For 40 of the last 44 years, the Congress has patiently built the country. For four of the last 44 years, non-Congress governments have systematically wrecked the country," it says and asks, "Do you want our beloved Motherland to be built or wrecked?"

Why Congress: In a rhetoric paragraph, the draft manifesto says, "If you want our India to be built strong and self-reliant, fearless and proud, if you want our India to be the messiah of the poor and the voice of the oppressed, if you want our India to be respected in the world, the experience of the last 15 terrible months shows there is only one way forward: Vote Congress."

It says that the non-Congress instability has meant a total disruption in growth and development, an increase in the burden of the poor, spiralling prices, falling production, the drying up of employment opportunities, the abandonment of anti-poverty programmes, deepening of social fissures and fierce social tensions leading to riots, atrocities on Harijans and dalits of every description, indignities heaped on women and disruption of all normal life.

"The instability of four years has also meant the total collapse of India's prestige in the world. When the Indian

government is unstable, the world stops listening to India's voice. The worst impact of this is on the Nonaligned Movement which grows leaderless and rudderless. Imperialist forces are then encouraged to interfere in our internal affairs and make us hostage to their economic, diplomatic and military blackmail.

"An unstable India thus becomes easy prey to hostile enemy forces who are out to sabotage our freedom and independence, that freedom for which Mahatma Gandhi and Nehru fought with such tenacity, that Independence for which Indira Gandhi laid down her life," it adds.

The manifesto presents comparative data during Congress(I) and non-Congress regimes on exports, growth and diversification of industry, and credit-rating to prove its superiority of governance. On the international field, it claims, "Ours was one of the most highly respected countries in the world" without any significant position today.

Domestic problems: "Every major domestic problem that the country suffers from is an inheritence from non-Congress rule. Some of the Congress has solved. Others the National Front government and its successor have aggravated," the draft adds, listing the problems of Mizoram, Tripura, Darjeeling, Punjab, Assam, Jammu and Kashmir and Tamil Nadu. In the case of Darjeeling, it accuses the Left Front of pursuing a policy that badly "alienated the Gurkhas, an ethnic micro-minority."

In Jammu and Kashmir, the draft manifesto says the excesses of militants are matched by the excesses of an inhuman administration that has stained India's fair name for "respect for human rights." It is critical of the National Front Prime Minister for not visiting the state even once during his 11 months in power.

In Punjab, the writ of the Union government virtually failed to run during the National Front rule, while it further deteriorated during Mr Chandra Shekhar's regime, says the draft.

About Mr Chandra Shekhar's offer for negotiations, the draft says, "The government of India appears to be ready to discuss anything with secessionists, even the break-up of our Motherland. The two essential conditions laid by the Congress government for the commencement of negotiations, namely the eschewal of violence and acceptance of the framework of the Constitution, have been dropped by the present government, handing over to the terrorists the biggest moral victory they have gained since trouble in Punjab began some 13 years ago."

It wants a clear-cut stand from the National Front on the secessionist demands of the ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam] as well as the AGP [Asom Gana Parishad—Assam People's Council] and the DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] the latter two parties being its constituents.

Mandal report: The draft manifesto says the Mandal recommendations are an issue on which the country has been needlessly divided. The party takes credit for encouraging compilation of the report.

On reservation, it recommends:

- Fresh identification be undertaken scientifically;
- Most backward among the backward classes be given priority through equity of opportunity;
- Economically advantaged individuals among the backward classes not corner all the benefits;
- The minorities and the poor of all communities also be looked after;
- A national consensus, and
- Supplementation of reservations by a variety of actions across a wide spectrum of national endeavour to end the handicaps and disadvantages to under which the socially and educationally backward classes have laboured for centuries.

* Release Postponed

91AS0859B Madras THE HINDU in English 13 Apr 91 p 4

[Article: "Congress(I) Postpones Manifesto Release"]

[Text] New Delhi, April 12. The Congress(I) has postponed the release of its election manifesto to April 16. It was scheduled to be released by the party president, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi tomorrow.

Announcing this, the party spokesman, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, said work on preparation of the manifesto was still on and Mr. Gandhi, who will be releasing the document, was going on an election tour.—PTI [PRESS TRUST OF INDIA]

* Gandhi Speaks at Madras Campaign Rally

91AS0848A Madras THE HINDU in English 19 Apr 91 p 3

[Article: "N.F. [National Front], BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] Have Divided Society, Says Rajiv"]

[Excerpt] Madras, April 18. The Congress (I) President, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, while launching the campaign of the Congress (I)-AIADMK [All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] Democratic Front at a rally here today, said that the focus of his party's manifesto was on achieving the uplift of the poor. The party's first promise was to control prices within a timeframe to make the life of the people easier. "For the first time in our manifesto we have given a commitment to do programmes in a timeframe."

Mr. Gandhi said that during the past 15 months society had got divided on caste, religion and language. The major task should now be to heal the wounds inflicted on people. The minority people, particularly in the North, had gone through a very difficult phase. Riots and the number of communal incidents witnessed in Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Gujarat had never been at this level even during partition. The Congress would address itself very seriously to this issue.

He said communalism had risen to this level because the National Front and the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] worked together to bring it to this point. They were looking at only the vote bank and split society which even the British could not do in 200 years.

India had also disappeared from the world map. "Today nobody looks at India" which was a proud nation and had its rightful place in the world. "Politically we are nobody and economically we are finished," he said.

Question of survival Mr. Gandhi said the country's position in the world must be restored. "It is not just a question of pride, today it has become of question of survival because the world equations have changed from two-power balance to a single-power balance. In such a situation if India is not strong, we cannot find our place in the new relationships that are developing".

The non-Congress experiments in Delhi had failed within a very short time. It was not just Delhi that had not remained stable and within 15 months even States where there were majority Governments had now to face elections. What kind of progress and development could take place in such a situation, he asked and appealed to the people to vote for the Congress(I) and the AIADMK to provide stable governments at the Centre and the State, work for the poor and make India a great nation.

Referring to the huge backlog of unemployment, Mr. Gandhi said the first priority of their elected government would be rapid industrial development. [passages omitted]

* Shekhar, Other Janata Dal-S Members Campaign

* Statement to Press

91AS0849A Madras THE HINDU in English 9 Apr 91 p 7

[Article: "PM's [Prime Minister's] Programme for Change"; quotation marks as published]

[Text] New Delhi, April 5. The following is the text of the press statement by Prime Minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar today.

"It is unfortunate that after 44 years of India's independence, a majority of the Indians remain deprived of basic necessities of life. Children and expectant mothers continue to suffer from malnutrition, and infant mortality is one of the highest in the world. In a civilised society every child has the right to survive and thrive. Democratic Governments are under an obligation to provide elementary education, primary health services, safe drinking water and a clean environment for all but with priority for the poor and the unfortunate.

"Outmoded traditions and obsolete ideas on religion and caste cannot be permitted to be used to divide the people. Nor can these be allowed to incite violence and communal hatred that threaten the very fabric of our democratic polity. Social transformation will have to begin with a direct onslaught on old and deep-rooted prejudices. The continuing neglect of Adivasis and Harijans, who constitute the weakest sections of India, is a blot on our society. In today's India, religious minorities suffer from a sense of insecurity. Backward classes and poorer sections feel ignored.

"Their fears as also aspirations cannot be ignored any longer. We have to seek effective, bold and immediate policy alternatives to these problems. The nation is passing through a period of turbulance because we have ignored these problems. If at this time we do not rise above narrow and partisan interests, if we do not display courage to take difficult decisions we shall endanger the unity and integrity of the country.

A new order: "India is not changing fast enough to keep pace with the rest of the world. Now is the time for us to display courage and accept the reality of the emerging new trends in the world. We must evolve a new Indian socio-economic and political order to enable us to make a united and cohesive effort to catch up with the rest. India can earn a distinguished place in the comity of nations only after it has found effective solutions to its own major problems. There has to be peace and amity in the country to promote world peace.

The present elections place a heavy responsibility on the people. They must rise above past prejudices to share the great adventure of giving the country a new life and enabling to usher in a new era of hope and confidence.

"In pursuit of this objective I place before the people a programme of structural changes in the polity structure. I invite all like-minded people to support this programme to face the coming challenges.

"To pursue various tasks of nation-building there is an urgent need to establish institutional mechanisms that give opportunity for local initiative and a sense of involvement and satisfaction at the grassroot levels. It is not surprising if there has been frequent expression of disapproval of excessive concentration of administrative and fiscal power with the Centre. This is not in conformity with the intentions of the framers of the Indian Constitution. The ideals of a decentralised administration and political structure need to be urgently translated into action in all earnestness.

"For obtaining the willing cooperation of the largest number of people the district and local bodies must become the primary instruments of people's involvement. This would obviously need transfer of certain fiscal and administrative powers to local government. Steps in this direction, however, demand statutory provisions for holding elections of local bodies periodically. If the process of decentralisation is implemented in its true spirit by transferring necessary fiscal and administrative powers to local bodies we would have initiated a healthy process of jana swaraj.

"This process will culminate in giving more autonomy to States. The true spirit of federalism will ensure better understanding between the Centre and States. The question of creating smaller States will be re-examined in consultation with the States in keeping with the cultural aspirations and administrative efficiency.

Biggest resource: "Manpower is India's biggest national resource. It is a pity that millions of youths, educated and otherwise, remain unemployed. Their energies can be fruitfully channelised if we can enlist them into a "rachna vahini" [strong efforts] for undertaking establishment and

expansion of economic infrastructure in road housing, water and land use management, electrification and removal of illiteracy. The thrust of the 'rachna vahini' should be to use the youth power for various nation-building tasks, including public education and mass mobilisation.

It is well known that regional imbalances do not get fully reflected at the State level. Each State has certain districts or geographically distinct regions which are not always able to find avenues for expression of their cultural identity and the unique nature of their problems. Without taking a rigid stand and making it a matter of false prestige it would be in the national interest to build a political mechanism for accommodating local voices and genuine concerns. Development boards, as in Maharashtra, offer one alternative for economically backward areas which have contiguity and commonalities in population.

Too many controls: It is a widely shared belief that Indian economic regulations are excessive, controls very restrictive and there exist a multiple of administrative agencies which crush entrepreneurial initiative and cause delays—all contributing to inefficiency, corruption and harassment. No one can defend the present system of India's economic administration. It needs to be rationalised and streamlined. The small-scale sector, service establishments and new professional entrepreneurs experience a large variety of difficulties. There is an urgent need to liberate the small entrepreneurs and rural and service industries from the 'inspector raj.'

"Developing economies in modern times need to borrow and import sophisticated technologies from industrially advanced nations. Foreign loans, however, cannot become a substitute for international economic efforts or a support for consumption. The adoption of the philosophy of liberalisation without determining priorities of investment has cost India heavily. The present crisis needs hard decisions as also cooperation of friendly countries.

"We will create conditions for the non-resident Indians to make a significant contribution in helping India meet the difficult balance of payments situation as well as provide their talent and participation for speedy economic development. The recruitment and training of the police force is to be so organised as to prove effective in containing terrorism and divisive tendencies without using excessive coercive powers and being directly answerable to the community.

"India stands for world peace, mutual cooperation, and understanding with all countries. We have, however, to pay special attention to resolving differences and enlarging areas of commonality—economic, social and cultural—with our neighbours and other South Asian economies. The need is for more intense regional cooperation and coming together of the developing countries.—UNI

* Speeches Open Campaign

91AS0849B Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 1 Apr 91 pp 1, 11

[Article: "PM [Prime Minister] Attacks Cong. 'Misrule'"]

[Text] New Delhi March 31. The Janata Dal (S) [JD(S)] today launched its election campaign at the Ramlila Maidan here with the Prime Minister, Mr Chandra Shekhar, making a frontal attack on the Congress for "misrule" at a rally from which the two-party chief ministers in favour of an alliance with the Congress abstained, reports PTI [PRESS TRUST OF INDIA].

Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav of Uttar Pradesh and Mr Chimanbhai Patel of Gujarat, who were scheduled to address the rally, reportedly favour an electoral alliance with the Congress as their governments were dependent on the party for survival.

The scathing criticism of the Congress by the Prime Minister further fuelled the speculations that the two chief ministers were at loggerheads with the central leadership on the question of electoral adjustment with the Congress.

In his 20-minute hard-hitting speech, the Prime Minister had a dig at his cabinet colleague, Dr Subramaniam Swamy, for his reported negotiations for an electoral alliance with the Congress which, he said, had ruined the country's economy.

Mr Patel and Mr Yadav are members of the party's apex eight-member panel on finalisation of the party's electoral strategy including alliance with other parties.

They, along with Dr Swamy, are also members of the three-member sub-committee appointed by the apex body at its first meeting on Friday last to explore the possibility of forging an alliance with the Congress. Immediately after the formation of the sub-committee, its members called on the Congress president, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, to hold discussions on the issue.

Setting the tone for the party's election campaign, the Prime Minister termed as "pernicious" the Congress attempt to project one man as its sole leader. He also came down heavily on the congress's assertion that it alone could provide a stable government at the Centre.

While other leaders of the party, including its president and deputy prime minister, Mr Devi Lal, who addressed the rally, named the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] and the Janata Dal for dividing the nation in the name of caste and religion, the Prime Minister singled out the Congress for attack.

Without naming anybody, the Prime Minister said that during the past four years, Rs [rupees] 40,000 crores of foreign loan had been taken. "Where has the entire amount gone?" Mr Chandra Shekhar asked and said the people of the country were entitled to know.

He alleged that the huge amount had been frittered away for the benefit of the affluent classes instead of providing drinking water, medicines, schools and other basic necessities to the poor people.

The lopsided policies of the Congress during its 40 years of rule had resulted in a paradoxical situation where the workers, peasants and labourers who produced the wealth became poorer and the wealth began flowing to the cities. This has to be reversed, he said.

Ridiculing the plank of the congress, Mr Chandra Shekhar said that the making and unmaking of a government would not provide stability but it would come through the uplift of the deprived sections.

Stating that the country was passing through a grave economic crisis and its unity and integrity was in danger, the Prime Minister said he knew that his party was not big and it had little resources to face the mid-term elections.

"But we have the courage and determination of millions of people especially youth with us," Mr Chandra Shekhar said.

The Prime Minister said the country's resources were limited and the affluent sections would have to make sacrifices to ensure its development and to bring happiness to the poorer sections.

He did not claim that his government had brought heavens on the earth during its four-month rule but it had certainly pulled the nation away from the brink of disaster, the Prime Minister said.

Referring to the situation in Punjab, Kashmir and Assam, the Prime Minister said that he had invited even those who were called militants to negotiate with the government to resolve the problem.

Today the situation has improved and "we could see people moving freely in Amritsar and in other places even late in the night," he said.

Stressing that he would always prefer negotiated settlement of all problems, the Prime Minister referred to an allegation made by a CPM [Communist Party of India-Marxist] leader that he was acting under the influence of some foreign powers.

"Everybody knows that the CPM itself is guided by a foreign country", he said without naming the leader that he had no business to sermonise him.

"Tomorrow we may get a welcome news from Assam or Kashmir", Mr Chandra Shekhar said adding that it was because of positive efforts made by his government to improve the situation in those states.

Those who wanted to encash human miseries and death should know that the great Indian masses were prepared to frustrate their nefarious designs, he said.

On relations with the neighbouring countries, the Prime Minister said that India's relations with Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh had improved.

For the first time, the United States and the United Kingdom had said that the Shimla Agreement should be the basis for resolving the disputes between India and Pakistan.

The Janata Dal (S) president, Mr Devi Lal, said the biggest challenge before the people was to carry on the struggle against feudalism and capitalism.

He said the farmers and rural masses should unitedly fight for improving their lot and give a befitting reply to "political brokers" who helped industrialists, license-seekers and traders responsible for subverting the development of rural India.

"Exploitative relationship between rural and urban India will end if only the rural people wake up and put right people in right places in Parliament," the deputy prime minister said.

Lashing out at the former Prime Minister, Mr V. P. Singh, and the BJP president, Mr L. K. Advani, for loss of innocent lives through "Mandal and kamandal", he cautioned the people to see through their "divisive designs".

Mr Devi Lal said the Mandal commission report was lying untouched for the last 12 to 13 years and the sudden announcement of Mr V. P. Singh to implement the recommendations was "part of a conspiracy to divide backward communities and poor classes".

Dwelling at length on the country's economic situation, the finance minister, Mr Yashwant Sinha, said even the National Front government had not taken effective remedial measures.

He said that as on March 31 last year, the total foreign debt stood at Rs 80,000 crores.

Mr Sinha said the country's economy was on the verge of collapse in the beginning of 1990 and accused the National Front government of doing little to redeem the worsening economic situation.

The finance minister said that during the JD(S) rule India asked for the IMF loan without compromising its respect, dignity and honour.

Other prominent speakers included the Haryana chief minister and JD(S) secretary-general, Mr Om Prakash Chautala, the commerce minister, Dr. Subramaniam Swamy, the deputy health minister, Mr Dasai Chaudhary, the urban development minister, Mr Daulat Ram Saran, the textiles minister, Mr Hukum Dev Narayan Yadav, the Janata Party leader, Mr Indubhai Patel and Mr Sant Bux Singh, brother of the former Prime Minister, Mr V. P. Singh.

UNI from Ballia adds: Mr Chandra Shekhar said the letter written by him to the U.S. President Mr George Bush, was "customary".

Talking to newsmen at the Ballia airport before leaving for Chandigarh, he refuted the allegation of the Congress leader, Mr Pranab Mukherjee, that he had written the letter to Mr Bush earlier.

He said he had written the letter since the foreign secretary, Mr Muchkund Dubey, was going to the United States and "it is customary to send such letters".

The Prime Minister discounted the policy of any alliance with the Janata Dal in the coming Lok Sabha elections. He said no such offer had come to him either from the Janata Dal or from the Congress so far. He said he did not know which party would support him in the coming elections.

In reply to a question, Mr Chandra Shekhar said the Janata Dal (S) had not finalised its electoral issues nor the number of seats it was going to contest.

He said poverty, unemployment and removal of backwardness should be electoral issues and not Ram Janambhoomi. "That will only aggravate communal violence in the country," he said.

About the recent Saharanpur riots, he said it was "most unfortunate" and an inquiry was going on. He said stray incidents like these could not be ruled out in the coming elections but efforts should be made to minimise them. He said steps had been taken to normalise the situation in Punjab.

Shekhar to Students

91AS0849C Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 27 Mar 91 p 4

[Article by Monimoy Dasgupta: "'Aaj ka Arjun' Shekhar Sets Tone for Battle"; parentheses as published]

[Text] Kurukshetra, March 26: The Prime Minister, Mr Chandra Shekhar, today pledged to reconstruct a *naya Bharat* (New India) and appealed to the youth to help him in this task.

Addressing the students of Kurukshetra University here, Mr Chandra Shekhar said, *Yeh Kurukshetra ka aitihasik maidan hain jahan anyay ke khilaf nyay ke jeet hui huain. Chaliye, hum yahan se ek naya Bharat rache.* (This is the historic land of Kurukshetra where justice has prevailed over injustice. Let us take the pledge for a New India from here.

The Haryana chief minister, Mr Om Prakash Chautala, who was accompanying Mr Chandra Shekhar, said the prime minister was launching His 'Mahabharat' from here to fight for the right of the poor, downtrodden and the oppressed. He said Mr Chandra Shekhar was *aaj ka Arjun* [today's Arjun] and the new generation ought to be inspired by such a personality who fought against injustice. Mr Chandra Shekhar will fight the Mahabharat not with bows and arrows but with ballots, Mr Chautala told the students.

Making an extremely emotional speech to the students, Mr Chandra Shekhar said that the country was now passing through its worst possible phase as the confidence of the people had been totally shattered. When the confidence of the people has been shattered, it is very difficult to save the country, he said, and in the same breath added: There is only one way out. The youth are the biggest strength of this country. They will have to restore the confidence of the people and construct a naya Bharat [new India].

Later, addressing a meeting of the Janata Dal(S)[Socialist] workers, Mr Chandra Shekhar said the only way the country could tide over the prevailing crisis was by shunning mutual hatred. He said: *Banduk ki goli nahi, pyar ki boli bolo* (Don't talk in terms of bullets but spread the message of love).

A politician's popularity should not be weighed in terms of how many seats the party he leads has won in parliament, but how many hearts he has won, Mr Chandra Shekhar said, adding that several Prime Ministers had come and several Prime Ministers had gone, but none of them were able to tackle and find a solution to the problem of poverty and unemployment. Instead of constructing fountains to beautify Delhi, my priority will be to provide drinking water for the villages, he said.

Mr Chandra Shekhar said natural resources like the sun and water were available to the poor and rich alike but it is a pity that the poor who construct buildings themselves live in houses without roofs, those who grow crops starve. In our new India we will have to change this system.

Mr Chandra Shekhar said it was a pity that though people like Mahatma Gandhi and Jayaprakash Narayan had shown the way a long time back, we have not been able to follow these great sons of India. It is our duty to fulfil their dreams.

The Prime Minister ridiculed those who thought that Ram is in a mandir or masjid, saying, *Ram ek garib ke bhook mein hain* (Ram is there in a poor man's hunger).

Mr Chautala, who spoke to the Janata Dal(S) workers before the Prime Minister, invited Mr Chandra Shekhar to contest the ensuing mid-term elections from the Kurukshetra parliamentary constituency. You need not even come here. The Janata Dal(S) workers in this historic battlefield will ensure your victory from here because you are starting your *naya Bharat* from here, he told Mr Chandra Shekhar.

* Shekhar Popularity Analyzed

91AS0849D Madras THE HINDU in English 27 Mar 91 p 8

[Article by Prem Shankar Jha: "The Enigma of P.M.'s [Prime Minister's] Popularity"]

[Text] Now that the curtain is about to come down on India's first mandate-less Government the time has come to ask ourselves what made Mr. Chandra Shekhar so popular with the urban middle class in the country. The popularity cannot be denied. In Delhi at least, it has been the talk in the drawing rooms for the past three months. His abrupt resignation was greeted with dismay and when the elections were announced, rich Indians grasped at every straw in the hope that some as yet unforeseen combination of circumstances would bring him back to power.

Mr. Chandra Shekhar's popularity is all the more difficult to understand, because the record of his Government is not just undistinguished, but murky. Few would have blamed him if his Government had done nothing. No Government facing intractable problems with no immediate solutions, without a mandate from the people, and with at most twelve months to live, could have done much. But Mr. Chandra Shekhar's Government did do a great deal and all of it was tailor made to further weaken our democracy and our imperilled national unity.

Grievous Blow

The most grievous blow that Mr. Chandra Shekhar struck was to dismiss the Governments of Assam and Tamil Nadu. The excuses he gave were pathetic, especially in the case of Assam, where a poll announcement was at most 21 days away. The effect of that decision forecast earlier in these columns has been to heighten the growing alienation of the Ahoms from the Indian State and increase the popularity of the ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam]. One result is the growing connivance of the local administration with the extremists, reflected in the escape from the jail of key ULFA leaders. A more serious fallout is the pressure that the Asom Gana Parishad [AGP-Assam People's Council] has come under to adopt 'self-determination' as its goal for the State. Mr. Prafulla Kumar Mahanta has clarified that he meant it within the framework of greater autonomy for all States, but the AGP's reported stand reflects a definite weakening of nationalist forces in the State that has, among other things, strained its relations with its partners in the National Front.

The dismissal of the Tamil Nadu Government could not have failed to strengthen separatist forces in the State. Mr. Karunanidhi's strong links with the National Front and with Mr. V. P. Singh, in particular, after he espoused job reservation for the backward classes, have so far dissuaded him from taking a more aggressive line. But if the brute majority of the Congress(I) and the AIADMK [All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] prevails in the next election, there is no telling which way he will go in the future.

Not content with having stirred up two more hornet's nests, Mr. Chandra Shekhar's Government was getting set to topple the Government of Mr. Lalloo Prasad Yadav in Bihar. Indeed, only the sudden spurt in differences between the Janata Dal(S) and the Congress(I) that led to Mr. Chandra Shekhar's resignation, saved it. Those who understand Bihar's caste-ridden politics and had noted the dangerous pitch to which caste animosities had been roused in the wake of the anti-Mandal agitation know that unseating the Lalloo Prasad Yadav Government could easily have led to a slaughter of the upper castes by the backwards in the State.

Not content with dismissing elected Governments, the Janata Dal(S) Government has been dismissing Governors with a royal disregard of constitutional propriety. The Governor of Bihar, Mr. Yunus Saleem, was dismissed because he fulfilled his constitutional duty to read out the address prepared for him by the Bihar Government. And Mr. D. D. Thakur was removed because, as Governor of Assam, he did not feel that it was incumbent on him to carry out each and every order of the Central Government irrespective of the effect that it would have on public opinion and the anti-ULFA campaign in Assam.

The Chandra Shekhar Government's record has been deplorable in other ways. Shortly after it came to power, it indulged in a spate of transfers of senior civil servants. In the last few days, it has indulged in another undignified scramble to transfer key officials and fill vacant posts. On both occasions its motives were equally dubious. On the first occasion it wanted to remove officials who were reputed to have been close to Mr. V. P. Singh and brought in those who were reputed to be close to Mr. Rajiv Gandhi. On the second occasion, it was to pave the way for a "smooth election" and, more significantly, to bury inconvenient investigations like the one that was being carried out into the St. Kitts forgery case by Mr. N. K. Singh of the CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation].

Nothing has so highlighted how completely the Chandra Shekhar Government is mired in the filth of the Rajiv Gandhi era as the transfer of Mr. N. K. Singh to the Border Security Force just four days before the deadline set by the Election Commission for banning all such moves. Mr. Chandra Shekhar took this step, above all, to kill the investigation into the forged papers that were leaked by "unknown persons", purporting to reveal that Mr. V. P. Singh had a bank account abroad operated by his son. The CBI's investigations had come close to establishing that the key player in this sordid drama was none other than Mr. Chandra Shekhar's close friend, international godman Chandraswamy. It had, therefore, moved to prevent Chandraswamy from leaving the country and had asked him to appear before it for questioning. The CBI also had *prima facie* grounds for suspecting that Mr. Subramaniam Swamy was involved in some way. Thus, Mr. Chandra Shekhar's action was clearly designed to prevent inconvenient exposures about the sordid deals that he had made in his unrelenting climb to power.

The N. K. Singh episode serves to remind one of the extraordinary reek of corruption that has surrounded this Government from the days of its inception. The Janata Dal (S) was itself born out of corruption. People who now hold ministerial portfolios, like Mr. Bhagey Goverdhan, are on record that they were offered Rs.[rupees]50 lakhs to defect. That nearly everyone who crossed over to Mr. Chandra Shekhar was suitably rewarded is one of the best known, but strangely enough, least discussed 'secrets' in Delhi. Shortly after he came to power, Mr. Chandra Shekhar put the Bofors investigation on the back burner, even though, with the release of the documents pertaining to one of the six frozen accounts by a Swiss federal court, one of the last hurdles in the way of the investigation had been removed. His Government went out of its way to help those who were trying to get the investigation quashed by challenging the FIR [First Information Report] at the Delhi High Court and very nearly succeeded. Later, Mr. Chandra Shekhar played host to old friends such as convicted arms dealer Adnan Khashoggi and Chandraswamy. The attempt to quash the St. Kitts investigation was thus the last of a long line of actions that went to show that in the Chandra Shekhar era morality was obsolete.

Any one of these actions, let alone all of them together in so short a period of time, would have brought down a storm of criticism on Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's head two years ago. Mr. V. P. Singh was pilloried for far less—witness the declaration of President's rule in Karnataka for a few days when Mr. Gandhi's sudden and authoritarian diktat

removing Mr. Veerendra Patil from the Chief Ministership and Mr. Patil's refusal to comply left the State without a Government in the face of rising communal tensions. But there is barely a whisper of criticism of Mr. Chandra Shekhar today. With an adroitness worthy of a Houdini, the middle class has succeeded in putting the blame for all the actions that it does not like on the Congress.

Why has Mr. Chandra Shekhar become such a darling of the middle class? The clue is to be found in the two most widely heard remarks about him. The first is that he 'tried to do something'. The second is that he was refreshingly earthy. He spoke directly to the people and his statements were free of moral cant.

The first remark is not unwarranted: at his press conference after resigning, Mr. Chandra Shekhar said that while he may not have solved any problem, he has brought down tensions in society. This is certainly true where the Ayodhya dispute is concerned. By getting the VHP [Vishwa Hindu Parishad] and the Babri Masjid Committee to start talking to each other, he took a great deal of the heat out of the dispute and revived the hope of a peaceful compromise. His attempt to talk to the militants in Punjab and his dialogue with Mr. Simranjit Singh Mann similarly revived hopes of a settlement of this conflict also.

But behind these immediate causes is a deeper reason for his popularity. Mr. Chandra Shekhar brought back the old wheeling-dealing politics that the Indian elite is not only familiar with, but wants to see continued. It does so because it is itself a product of this reciprocal trading of favours and influence. Any talk of a change is seen by it as a threat and immediately creates apprehension and distrust. The stock response is to try and discredit the credentials of the leader or leaders who talk of reform and to show that they are no better than the rest of the members of the elite from whom they have sprung. The first Janata Government got this treatment between 1977 and 1979 and Mr. V. P. Singh got it in abundant measure. That is one of the reasons why his announcement of the job reservation scheme in August was universally and stubbornly interpreted as a dirty political trick to get the best of an already vanquished Devi Lal. That is also why his decision to face the House after the BJP [Bnaratiya Janata party] had withdrawn its support and not to resign immediately was criticised as a craven attempt to stick to power, when his willingness to surrender power rather than compromise with the BJP on the 'kar seva' [service] issue went unnoticed.

The truth is that the elite does not want any change in the *status quo*. When Mr. Singh campaigned on the slogans of removing corruption, he got the support of a large section because a cleaner polity would make the *status quo* more acceptable to the have-nots. But when he tried to change the *status quo*, by implementing a scheme for sharing power with the poor, the middle class was ranged against him. The significance of the profound tolerance that it is now showing towards Mr. Chandra Shekhar is that this class and particularly the elite within it has at last come to terms with its true nature. If it has to choose between a corrupt *status quo* and a cleaner, but changed political dispensation, it will unhesitatingly choose the former.

• BJP Expected To Win in Uttar Pradesh Assembly

91P40256A New Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi 20 Apr 91 p 5

[Article by Hemant Sharma: "All the Parties Are Neglecting the Vidhan Sabha Elections"]

[Text] All the parties are neglecting the Uttar Pradesh [U.P.] Vidhan Sabha [state assembly] elections. [passage omitted]

In a straight fight, BJP will win. This is now becoming known. This is due to the four-way fight taking place in which no party need get a majority [of votes in any single constituency]. By just concentrating on retaining their following, they can come close to the dream of ruling U.P. for the first time. Congress (I), however, is not willing to accept this. Congress (I) leaders assert that BJP got only 11.33% of the vote in U.P. in 1989. Do they not also know that a party can get more seats even with a lower percentage of the vote? The same thing happened to them [in 1989]. [passage omitted]

Congress (I) sees caste Hindu votes slipping away to BJP. Although it is true that Congress (I) will gain more Harijan and Muslim votes this time than in 1989, no Congress (I) leader believes that the party will win by successfully splitting up the opposition votes. Some Congress (I) leaders claim that if they could capture the Muslims' votes, they could hit 30% and form the next government [in Uttar Pradesh].

In the last election, the wave of anti-Congress sentiment led the Janata Dal into power with just 29.59% of the vote. The party captured 204 seats. The situation, however, has been radically altered. The powerful Rajputs who helped get the vote [for Janata Dal] are scattered all over. Some Rajputs, angry over the Mandal mess, left for Congress. Others, upset over the Mandir confrontation, have gone over to BJP. In several districts, Rajputs have accepted Chandra Shekhar as the best leader. There are still others who remain with V.P. Singh.

The Congress (I) has selected women and youths as a majority of their candidates. These groups are nervous over reservations [for backward castes]. All parties have divided on communal lines. Whereas previously Mulayam Yadav and the Rajputs had united to capture power, now they are confronting one another. Brahmins have shed Congress (I) and embraced BJP. Muslim voters are in a quandry. They fear their vote will get split up. This would then contribute to a BJP victory. V.P. Singh retains the sympathies of 70% of Muslims for his stand on the Babri Mosque.

Antipathy toward V.P. Singh is running particularly strong in four eastern districts: Baliya, Gazipur, Ajmagarh and Varanasi. The anger of other Rajputs has lessened. The Kurmis who exist in great numbers are with the Janata Dal. A large number of Harijans will remain with the Janata Dal. The Bahujan Samaj Party retains its pull

primarily with leather-workers. BJP has stolen those of high caste from Congress (I). Thus the pattern of division of the vote by caste groups can be seen.

Both BJP and Janata Dal face the obstacle of lacking well known leaders on the state level such as Narayan Dutt Tiwari [Congress (I)] and Mulayam Singh [Samajwadi Janata Party]. Nevertheless, BJP should emerge preeminent in the next Vidhan Sabha. Although BJP lacks candidates who are competitive in the caste equation for Lok Sabha seats, the equations favor their candidates for the Vidhan Sabha seats. Congress (I) and Janata Dal have begun to realize this. BJP will reap the fruits of Mulayam Singh's ineffective government. The Singh government's performance has become an election topic along with Mandir and Mandal. Even apart from Ayodhya, his 1 year old government has mostly invoked wrath on the part of the people. Right from the start, Singh's administrative pressure forced out qualified individuals from his administration. [passage omitted]

Mulayam Singh fanned the flames of communalism in Uttar Pradesh. He injured the religious sentiments of many. The majority of castes are fed up with him. BJP is cashing in on this sentiment. [passage omitted]

Iran

Najafi Appointed Ground Forces Commander

LD0805182791 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the commander in chief of the armed forces, issued a decree today appointing Brigadier- General Abdollah Najafi, as the commander of the Ground Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Army. The text of the decree of the commander in chief of the Armed Forces is as follows:

In the name of the Almighty. Timsar [military title preceding names of brigadiers and higher ranks] Brigadier-General Abdollah Najafi: With divine blessing and with confidence in your faith and your compassionate commitment and the valuable services and experience you possess in the Army's top level management, I appoint you as the commander of the Ground Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Army. It is required that, in coordination with the Joint Staff, and cooperation with other sections of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Army, you provide high and outstanding quality for the forces.

I deem it necessary to express thanks for the valuable services rendered by Timsar Brigadier-General Hasani-Sa'di, who is one of the outstanding commanders of the Armed Forces and enjoys great honors. As a sign of appreciation for his services, I appoint him a member of the group of military advisors to the commander in chief of the Armed Forces [Khamene'i].

I beseech God Almighty success for all.
[Signed] Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i.
18 Ordibehesht, 1370 [8 May, 1991]

Habibi, Rowhani Appointed to Expediency Council

LD0805180191 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the leader of the Islamic revolution, issued a decree today appointing Dr. Hasan Habibi and Hojjat ol-Eslam Dr. Hasan Rowhani to the Expediency Discernment Council. The text of his eminence the leader's decree is as follows:

In the name of the Almighty. Dr. Hasan Habibi, first vice-president, and Your Excellency Hojjat ol-Eslam Dr. Hasan Rowhani: With regard to your excellencies' long-term experience and deep wisdom in the affairs of the country and the successful test provided by your active participation in the management of some sections of the executive system, I appoint your excellencies members of the Expediency Discernment Council up to the end of the current term. It is expected that, in cooperation with other esteemed and capable members of that council, you will take an effective part in the implementation of the crucial duties allotted to that supreme council. I beseech God Almighty for success for all of the council members.
[Signed] Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i
18 Ordibehesht 1370 [8 May 1991]

Genscher Visits Bakhtaran Refugee Camps

LD0805142191 Teheran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Mr. Hans-Dietrich Genscher, German foreign minister, today arrived in Bakhtaran Province and observed the situation of Iraqi refugees in the camps. He was briefed on aid to the refugees and the problems and difficulties faced by them. A correspondent of the Central News Unit reports:

[Unidentified correspondent] The German foreign minister, after arrival, had a short meeting with the governor-general of Bakhtaran and officials in charge of the crisis headquarters. He was briefed on the problems and needs of Iraqi refugees and the assistance extended to them. At this meeting, the German foreign minister, in the course of remarks, thanked the officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran for their sincere cooperation with relief teams from Germany who are based in the region. He referred to the acceptance of and provision of shelter for hundreds of thousands of Iraqi refugees by Bakhtaran Province. He said: We are aware of the responsibilities of your huge task and we know that the acceptance of Iraqi refugees and giving them shelter has created certain problems for you. Because of this, the ultimate aim is for us to be able to return these refugees to their homes and dwellings, through political pressure, so that they may continue their lives in tranquillity.

Mr. Genscher referred to the point that not all the aid consignments sent by Germany is from the government; a large part of these consist of people's donations. He said: In the first days when Iraqi people turned into refugees, the aid was directed more at the refugees who were moving toward Turkey and no one paid any attention to the

difficulties faced by the Islamic Republic of Iran. But we hope that the reporters of the mass media accompanying me will—through their observations—be able to inform world public opinion about the depth of the tragedy and the problems of the refugees who have been given shelter in the camps of Iran.

The German foreign minister then inspected the premises of German relief teams in Bakhtaran Province and was briefed on the ways Iraqi refugees were being assisted.

Mr. Genscher, also in a meeting with the Red Cross representatives of France, Britain, and Germany examined the problems and difficulties they were encountering in the process of carrying out their relief work.

The German foreign minister left around noon today to visit more Iraqi refugees camps in Bakhtaran Province.

Praises Relief Efforts

LD0805184191 Tehran IRNA in English 1641 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Bakhtaran, May 8, IRNA—German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher left here for Bonn Wednesday, concluding a three day official visit to Iran which included talks with high ranking officials and a visit to Iraqi refugees camps.

While in Tehran, Genscher held talks with President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani and Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati on bilateral relations, the developments in the Persian Gulf, the situation of Iraqi refugees and Iraq's status quo.

During his visit to a refugee camp here today, Genscher was encircled by a large number of Iraqi refugees who chanted anti-Iraq slogans to show their hatred of the atrocities committed against them by the Baghdad regime.

At a news conference held here this afternoon, Genscher hailed the Islamic Republic for providing the refugees with foodstuffs, sanitary and medical services. Genscher said not only Germany but also the whole world should help Iran with its humanitarian efforts. He promised that Germany would soon despatch physicians and medicines for the refugees to Iran.

The Bakhtaran governor general, who was present at the press conference, said although hundreds of trucks arrived in the region daily with relief aid donated by the Iranian people, the Iranian Government spends dlrs 15 million per day on housing, sanitation and care for the refugees.

President Receives Kuwaiti Shiite Leader

LD0905132191 Tehran IRNA in English 1155 GMT 9 May 91

[Text] Tehran, May 9, IRNA—Leader of Kuwait Shiite Muslims Hojjat ol-Eslam Muhammad Baqir Muhri met with President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani here Thursday and reported on Kuwait's status quo.

Muhri briefed the president on Kuwait's internal political situation, the status of Kuwaiti refugees and their return to their home country, and the role of the popular forces in the sheikhdom.

The president expressed hope that the Kuwaiti Government would treat its citizens well and take steps towards alleviating their pains and sufferings.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani also stressed the role Hojjat ol-Eslam Muhri and other Kuwaiti theologians should play in the reconstruction of Kuwait which was almost ruined during its occupation by Iraq last year.

Velayati on War Reparation Talks With Iraq

LD0805132491 Tehran IRNA in English 1227 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Tehran, May 8, IRNA—Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati today said that negotiations for getting war reparations from Iraq were underway without any results in sight yet.

"However, we should not forget that talks on reparations is not based on a resolution, and Article 6 of Resolution 598 can only be considered an opening to such negotiations," he added.

Velayati made the remarks during a visit to the pavilion of the Foreign Ministry's Institute for International and Political Studies at the 4th Tehran International Book Exhibition.

He said Article 6 does not mention war reparations, but points out the need to determine the party responsible for initiating the 1980-88 war between Iran and Iraq.

Velayati Confers With Visiting Thai Official

LD0805213191 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1430 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Mr. Kasemsamoson Kasemsi, the Thai minister of state for foreign affairs, who is visiting Tehran, met and conferred with Foreign Minister Velayati today. During the meeting, the two sides, stressing the expansion of bilateral ties, reviewed the establishment of a joint economic committee between the two countries.

Also in his meeting with Commerce Minister Vahhaji, the Thai minister discussed the trade issues of the two countries, Iran's non-oil exports to Thailand, and the import of Iran's required goods.

The Thai minister of state for foreign affairs held his first round of talks today with Mr. Borujerdi, our country's deputy foreign minister for Asian and Oceanic Affairs.

Western 'Propaganda' Plays Down Refugee Situation

LD0805194691 Tehran IRNA in English 1415 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Tehran, May 8, IRNA—The political propaganda of the Western mass media has outshone the plight of one million Iraqi refugees in Iran. In a politically-charged

publicity campaign the Western mass media have outshone the plight of one million Iraqi refugees near the border of Iran by magnifying the measures of the U.S. Allied countries led by the U.S. as a ringleader in building an encampment in northern Iraq.

The political campaign of the Western media occurs at a time when one million Iraqi refugees are fighting onerous problems in their encampments in Iran.

The Western mass media and especially the Voice of America have been continually reporting about the help being offered by the allied countries to the refugees and about the fact of the return to their homeland of Iraqi refugees.

If the area under the control of the allied powers in Iraq is filled to capacity by the refugees at some future time then it means that the number of Iraqi Kurdish refugees in those areas will be hardly one-fifths of the number of Iraqi refugees in Iran. And of the total 20,000 Iraqi refugees who have been lodged in those areas under the control of the allied countries the larger part of them have been led to those encampments from Turkey and not from Iran.

The political campaign of the United States has somehow caught the universal attention of the people, and those who have no knowledge of the reality, imagine that the larger number of the Iraqi refugees have been transferred to safe havens or returned home and that therefore no help need be offered them.

On the contrary there are still one million Iraqi refugees of various age groups who are struggling with their plight, each day many of them dying because of their problems.

Umar Baket, chairman of the United Nations High Commissariat in charge of the refugees recently visited Iraqi refugee camps in Iran and said that each day 2,000 Iraqis lost their lives in the camps. He attributed the reason to the irregularity of distribution of aids to the Iraqis, as well as the absence of mid- or long-term nutrition programs for the Iraqis.

He said if dysentery and diarrhea is not controlled among the young infant population of the refugees it will take a heavy daily toll on the infants and the children of the Iraqi refugees.

Mohyeddin Ahmad, an Iraqi refugee at the encampment in Dasht-e Zahab says in his camp there are 160,000 Iraqi refugees and that every day at least five of them die because of dysentery. In the face of the situation the international organizations have decreased their aids to the Iraqi refugees in Iran. Obviously the people who should bear the brunt of the criticism are those who have launched a propaganda campaign for their own political goals at the cost of the lives of millions of needy people.

The Iraqi refugees in Iran need urgent help and attention by the international circles, and their plight should not be allowed to fall to oblivion under the overpowering tide of the Western propaganda.

UN Envoy Discusses Refugees With Officials

NC0905103791 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 9 May 91

[Text] Mr. Sadruddin Aga Khan, the UN secretary general's special envoy for executive affairs, met with First Vice President Mr. Habibi last night and briefed him on the organization's relief policy for the Iraqi refugees. Mr. Habibi stressed the Islamic Republic of Iran's views on the need to guarantee the individual and collective security of Iraqi refugees who return to their country and said it will support any measures the United Nations may take toward this end. Mr. Habibi clarified that the United Nations should take responsibility for guaranteeing the security of the returning refugees and should supervise the areas that will be created for them.

Mr. Aga Khan also discussed the Iraqi refugees with Interior Minister Mr. Nuri last night. The UN secretary general's special envoy praised the Islamic Republic of Iran's assistance to the refugees and said that the United Nations wants to create conditions within Iraq that will encourage the refugees to return.

Interior Minister Mr. Nuri emphasized the dimensions of the tragedy and the vast number of refugees and said that their needs are so great that the assistance received so far is completely inadequate. While urging international organizations to increase their aid, the interior minister expressed gratitude for the help given by the UN High Commission for Refugee Affairs and by the World Food Program. He added: We hope to be able to meet the refugees' needs with assistance from international organizations.

At another meeting last night with Mr. Mottaki, our deputy foreign minister for international affairs, the UN secretary general's special envoy said: The Islamic Republic's humanitarian assistance to the Iraqi refugees has enhanced its credibility on the international level. He said: The United Nations intends to establish secure zones within Iraq and to give the refugees all necessary assistance to encourage them to return to their country.

Mr. Mottaki also expressed support for the UN efforts to help the refugees and to restore normalcy to Iraq. He called on the United Nations to remember the plight of the refugees from southern Iraq as well.

Mottaki Meets With UN Information Official

LD0805165491 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1430 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] In a meeting today with Mrs. Sevigny, the UN undersecretary general at the Office of Public Information; Mr. Mottaki, the Foreign Ministry deputy for international affairs, called for action and the implementation of UN policies in confronting international crises and problems before any action by a particular state or states. He also stressed the need for proper news coverage of the issues regarding the Iraqi refugees.

During the meeting, Mrs. Sevigny, who has come to Tehran to investigate grounds for cooperation between the office of public information of that organization with the Islamic Republic of Iran, said: The United Nations seeks cooperation with Iran on environmental issues, international security, and the campaign against narcotics.

Official on Efforts To Attain Economic Balance

LD0905090491 Tehran IRNA in English 0756 GMT 9 May 91

[Text] Tehran, May 9, IRNA—Deputy Minister of Plan and Budget Organization of Iran, Mas'ud Nili, said in an interview here Wednesday that Iran has anticipated a series of economic adjustment mechanisms within the framework of her five-year development plan.

He reminded that the decisions in that connection have been independent of the recommendations of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

The Plan and Budget Organization official said the omission of certain government subsidies now well over one year since their taking effect were not in any way in response to the recommendations of the World Bank.

He said after the end of the Iraq-Iran war the Iranian Government obviously had to make some forms of economic re-planning and adjust policies consistent with the dictates of the time and future plans.

Nili said one aspect of the goal is to ensure a better utilization of national resources as a substitute for imports. He added that improved domestic production during the past year has served to greatly eliminate a tendency on the part of a segment of suppliers to hoard consumer items.

He said to minimize its social side-effects the policies for attaining economic balance are to be introduced gradually so that the economically vulnerable sectors of the Iranian society will not suffer.

Italy To Construct Power Plants in Iran

LD0805154491 Tehran IRNA in English 0943 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Tehran, May 8, IRNA—Italy will grant a one-billion-dollar credit to Iran for implementation of the industrial agreements reached between Tehran and Rome, an Italian official told IRNA here Tuesday. Head of the Italian I.R.I. Institute Franco Nobelli who wound up an official visit to Iran Tuesday, said before departure that according to a note of understanding signed between the two countries during the visit, Italy will cooperate with Iran in the fields of energy, communication, air transportation and supply of equipments for power plants and steel manufacturing plants.

According to Nobelli the two sides also agreed to set up a joint research center in Iran for training technicians and specialists. Italy will start construction of four 320-megawatt units of a power plant in Iran immediately after the Iranian authorities issue permission for initiation of the work, he said.

The Italian official said that the agreement for construction of power plants in Iran were concluded a year ago and that Italy has granted 1.2 billion Italian liras for implementation of the agreement, especially for construction of two power plants in Bandar-e 'Abbas, southern Iran.

Australian Immigration Minister Begins Visit

LD0805195691 Tehran IRNA in English 1718 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Tehran, May 8, IRNA—Australian Immigration Minister Gerard L. Hand arrived here Wednesday afternoon and was greeted at Tehran airport by Mohammad Atrianfar, deputy interior minister for politico-social affairs.

Upon arrival, he told reporters that the aim of his visit to Tehran which follows his earlier tour of Iraqi refugee camps in Turkey was to get a better image of the refugee crisis.

During his three-day stay, Hand is scheduled to meet with Hasan Habibi, first vice president; 'Ali Akbar Velayati, foreign minister; and Hojjat ol-eslam Abdollah Nuri, interior minister. He will also visit refugee camps in Western Iran.

Australian Commerce Minister Concludes Visit

LD0805163491 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1430 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] The Ausralian minister for industry, technology and commerce, who visited Iran at the head of an economic and agricultural delegation, left Tehran at noon today. During his stay in Tehran, he met and conferred with the ministers of agriculture, commerce, heavy industries and the deputy minister of construction jihad.

Pakistan

Sharif 'Regrets' Indian 'Massacre' of Kashmiris

BK0905023091 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 9 May 91

[Text] Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has expressed deep grief and sorrow at the indiscriminate massacre of innocent Kashmiris by the Indian security forces. He expressed sympathy with the bereaved families and hoped that India will refrain from such naked violation of human rights. Mr. Nawaz Sharif said this in Islamabad during a meeting with Azad Jammu and Kashmir President Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan and a former premier of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Sardar Sikander Hayat Khan.

Editorial Commends Sharif on Nuclear Issue

BK0705052791 Karachi DAWN in English 5 May 91 p 11

[Editorial: "A correct stance"]

[Text] Prime Minister Mian Mohammad Nawaz Sharif's assertion that Pakistan will continue its nuclear programme irrespective of all considerations has much to

commend it. He told an Indian journal that the programme was Pakistan's "internal matter". Since there is a connection between Pakistan's nuclear plans and the suspension of the US aid, the Prime Minister said that Pakistan was "not very upset" about it and that Islamabad had not requested Washington for its revival. Ever since the Afghanistan issue went on the backburner, Pakistan's modest nuclear programme has suddenly become a disruptive factor in Washington's relationship with Islamabad. The yearly certification which the White House used to issue without much bother is now conspicuous by its absence, even though there is no material change in Pakistan's nuclear programme. No expansion worth the name has taken place in its nuclear facilities, and the programme continues to be of a peaceful nature. The only development of any significance is Islamabad's move to acquire nuclear plants from China and France. While an agreement with Beijing has already been signed, that with Paris is still under negotiation. A purchase deal with the latter has become difficult because of the abortive arrangements for the supply of a reprocessing plant in the '70s.

The question now is one of assuaging the American apprehension about the nature and orientation of the country's nuclear capability and not one of disbanding or even whittling down the nuclear programme. At its present level, Pakistan's nuclear facilities do not pose a threat to anyone. Successive governments have repeatedly said that Islamabad has no intention of manufacturing nuclear weapons. This, despite the fact that India tested a nuclear device as far back as 1974 and has feverishly pursued a nuclear weapons programme. Its own capacity to manufacture nuclear equipment is enormous: it even has fabricated an indigenous fast-breeder reactor which can supply enough plutonium for New Delhi to have a stockpile of nuclear weapons. Pakistan has no nuclear reactor in the accepted sense of the term. KANUPP [Karachi Nuclear Power Project], installed by Canada, is a small facility that produces electricity for Karachi, whle PINSTECH [Pakistan Institute of Nuclear Science and Technology] in Islamabad has a small reactor for research purposes. The only nuclear facility which is bothering some people is the one at Kahuta. Its capability has been blown out of proportion by a section of biased Western media men and lobbyists to sustain the bogey of an "Islamic bomb".

The fact is that a hugely energy-deficit country like Pakistan has no option but to develop its nuclear potential for power. Pakistan has also lagged behind in developing all its conventional energy sources. Even though proven reserves of oil have been placed at 108.94 million US barrels, the country actually produces less than half of its oil requirements. The heavy dependence on imported oil takes up a large portion of the country's scarce foreign exchange. The fall in home remittances, the continued rise in oil prices and a stagnant level of export earnings have combined to put an extraordinary strain on the country's foreign exchange position. Other sources of energy—coal, gas and hydroelectric—remain yet to be fully tapped, and undeniably our performance in this sector could have been better. For the future, however, what is needed is a comprehensive energy programme providing for the development of both the conventional sources of energy and the much-needed nuclear technology. Neglecting either will mean a difficult energy situation at a time when the demand for power is fast expanding, given the high birth rate and the country's developmental imperatives. The Prime Minister put it candidly when he said: "Aid or no aid, we should mind our own business. We have said many times that our nuclear programme is for peaceful purposes... We will not go and give an account on this" to anyone. The blunt tone has obviously to do with a conviction of the national energy compulsion rather than a confrontational posture on the nuclear issue as such. Pakistan and American have always maintained a fairly good and constructive relationship; it should stay that way. Afghanistan may be behind us, but hosts of other common interests in the region still tie us. It would be a pity if any serious misunderstanding on the nuclear question were to mar this relationship.

NATION Critical of U.S. Aid Cut-Off

BK0905052291 Lahore THE NATION in English 8 May 91 p 6

[Editorial: "U.S. Aid to Pakistan"]

[Text] It has been reliably learnt that the US has not only slashed aid commitment to Pakistan but has also rerouted approximately 750 million dollars worth of past aid which was in the pipeline. Speculations are that this money has been diverted to the Kurds. Be that as it may it is relevant to point out that cessation of aid already in the pipeline is not a usual occurrence. Aid once committed can be withdrawn but aid which has been channelled into a creditor nation is normally not withdrawn. That the US has used the Pressler Amendment to stop any future aid inflow into Pakistan and taken measures to ensure that even that aid already committed for use in our deficient social sectors is no longer available for our use perhaps best explains the current attitude of the US administration. Analysts in the US believe that there is little likelihood that the US aid to Pakistan wil be resumed since the Democrats are not expected to let the Republican administration do so. With the changing aid priorities of the US, with the Kurds and East Europeans being given greater preference than other Third World countries, Pakistan as regards bilateral aid is perhaps the first casualty. That priorities have similarly changed amongst other donor countries and agencies is also apparent. Thus in todays world countries like Pakistan will have to strive for achieving self-reliance, which will be at a tremendous cost to the government as its popularity will wane with a rise in taxes and lower expenditures and subsidies - policies which alone can make self-reliance an attainable goal.

But one can thank the US for small mercies. It has not put pressure on its allies to similarly cut aid to Pakistan and for the forthcoming financial year we are expected to get some aid from otehr sources, not as much as was required or requested by our government but enough to ensure that the budget deficit does not go out of hand. Of course the conditionalities are much more strict with the government of Pakistan expected to cut its defence budget this year, freeze salary rises, and raise utility rates. What such

policies would do to the government vis-a-vis domestic pressure groups is any one's guess. But that fiscal mismanagement has to be controlled to keep our economy viable has become not only a political campaign slogan that can be ignored once elections are over but a necessity.

Soviet Canceling Visit Shows 'Hardening'

BK0705040591 Lahore THE NATION in English 5 May 91 pp 1, 12

[By Mariana Baabar]

[Text] Islamabad—Moscow has dropped the idea, for the time being, of sending a high level representative to Islamabad for the purpose of seeking an end to the 12-year-old war in Afghanistan. Confirming this, a senior official commented, "there is some truth in this, and it is possible that the Soviets have indefinitely postponed the visit of Mr Kozyrev who was to head a high level delegation to Islamabad". The same official said that it appeared that after the fall of Khowst the Soviets have not responded to giving dates for the proposed delegation. THE NATION has further learnt from highly reliable sources that the fall of Khowst and reports of a massive build-up for a decisive push in Qandahar have caused hardening of position in Moscow. Around three months ago Pakistan Embassy in Moscow, which is still without an ambassador, was approached by the Soviet Foreign Office for arranging a visit of Mr Kozyrev to Islamabad. Mr Koryrev enjoys the status of an ambassador at large and led the Soviet experts team preparing drafts for the Geneva Accord on Afghanistan. He is also reported to be a trusted aide and close to Gorbachev. Some of our Afghan experts believed that the Soviets had decided to be flexible vis-a-vis Afghanistan. During this period 'informal' but secret contacts were also established with some representatives of the Najib government, though officially Pakistan denies that the Director-General of Inter Services Intelligence, Gen. Asad Durrani, met his counterpart Yakubi in Geneva in mid April. Some Western media claimed that during the "Pak-Afghan contacts", Pakistan representatives demanded that fundamentalist groups, headed by Hekmatyar, Sayyaf and Rabbani should be given a role in the Afghan interim government during the UN monitored elections. But parallel to these backroom negotiations was the decisive offensive again Khowst which ended in its liberation. Najib government strongly reacted to the fall and launched an intense propaganda campaign to prove that it was not the resistance but active military involvement of Pakistan which liberated Khowst. On the ground it fired Scuds on Khowst meanwhile Afghan Foreign Minister Wakil rushed to Moscow in desperation and managed Moscow's endorsement of the accusations that 'Pakistani intervention in Khowst' was a violation of the Geneva Accord. At home the Foreign Office denied this allegation.

Islamabad hoped that Khowst would not be an obstacle in political talk and underlined the need for a political settlement. Radio Moscow, however, talked about 'serious implications' and a few days ago radio Kabul reproduced stories of offensives on Qandahar from the PAF Press. The diplomats in Islamabad say that Moscow would talk only if an agenda is provided by Pakistan based on measures showing that it was not opting for any military option. Meanwhile, Foreign Office DG [Director General] Afghan desk Muhammad Riaz had concluded his visit to Tehran and was expected in Riyadh on Saturday.

He is expected back on May 7 decision to reestablish communication with not only Tehran and Riyadh but other major capitals involved in the Afghan crisis would be taken after Riaz submits his report on his talks.

9 Killed, 12 Injured in Rawalpindi Bomb Blast

BK0805102891 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1000 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] Nine people were killed and 12 injured in a bomb blast in the Sadar area of Rawalpindi this morning. All injured persons have been admitted to the Cantonment General Hospital. Federal Food and Agriculture Minister retired Lieutenant General Abdul Majid Malik inspected the explosion site and visited the Cantonment General Hospital where he inquired about the welfare of every injured person and the medical treatment being provided.

Later, the food and agriculture minister told the Radio Pakistan correspondent that the prime minister has directed him to see that the injured persons are taken proper care of. The prime minister has expressed profound grief and regret over this incident and said that those involved in such heinous crimes are the enemies of the country and the society. The food minister, on behalf of the prime minister, announced a compensation of 50,000 rupees each for those killed, 25,000 rupees each for those who have been seriously injured, and 10,000 rupees each for those slightly injured. Those killed in this incident include a woman, a child, and seven men.

Sugar Industries Handed Over to Private Sector

BK0605074591 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] Sugar industries have been handed over in full to the private sector in the country under the relaxation in rule and regulations and the policy of self-reliance by the government. This was stated by Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture retired Lieutenant General Abdul Majid Malik in Islamabad while inaugurating a five-day international workshop on sugar industries in Asia.